

# BOOK Magazine

VOLUME FORTY-FIVE  
NUMBER FOUR

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Rupert  
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### Your Town, My Town, Everybody's Town

THEY'RE all there—in a new American novel that will begin in the next issue of this magazine—a novel destined to lift its distinguished author to an even higher place than he now occupies among the really great fictionists of this country. Incidentally it is so different from anything else its author has ever written for this magazine—in which all his novels for years have appeared first and exclusively—that his followers will be no less amazed than charmed. The title of this novel is—

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## When Does Our Education Begin?

LIFE'S daily experience, its incidents and episodes, constitute man's real education. School days are merely preparation for the days of actual living and the education that follows.

The mind of youth may be likened to the unassembled parts of a delicate mechanism which the direction, training and inspirations of the school co-ordinate into a responsive engine of thought and action. It is a vicious fallacy to regard the school and college as the beginning and end of the educative process. The school and college are the shops where brains are made into minds and minds into quickened instruments of learning—instruments geared to record the subtlest impressions and reactions of experience. And the profoundest of all Life's teachers is—Experience!

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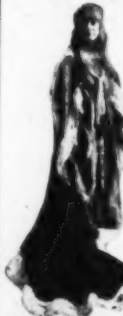
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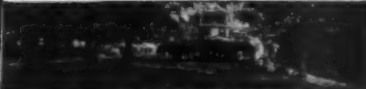
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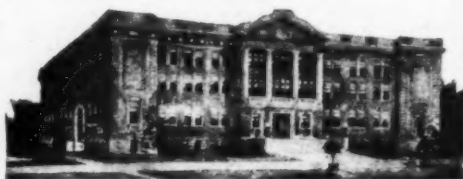
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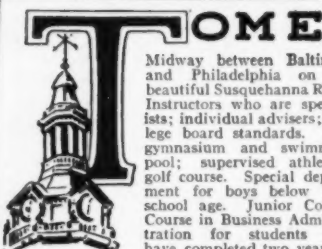
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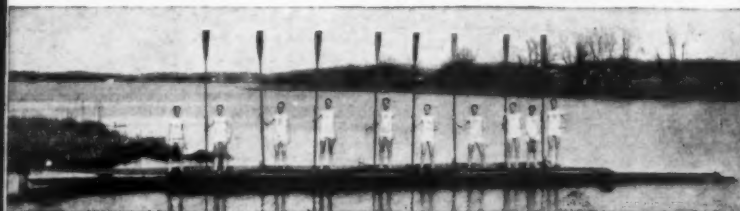
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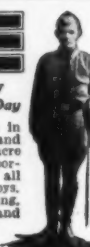
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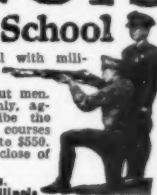
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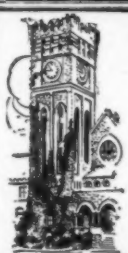
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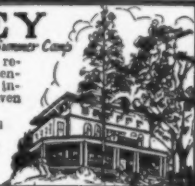
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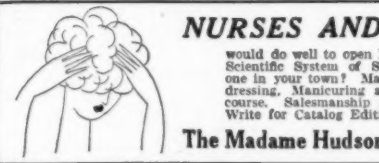


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**CLAIRE WINDSOR**  
Film Star

Photograph by Edwin Brown Hesser, Los Angeles



ALMA RUBENS  
Film Star

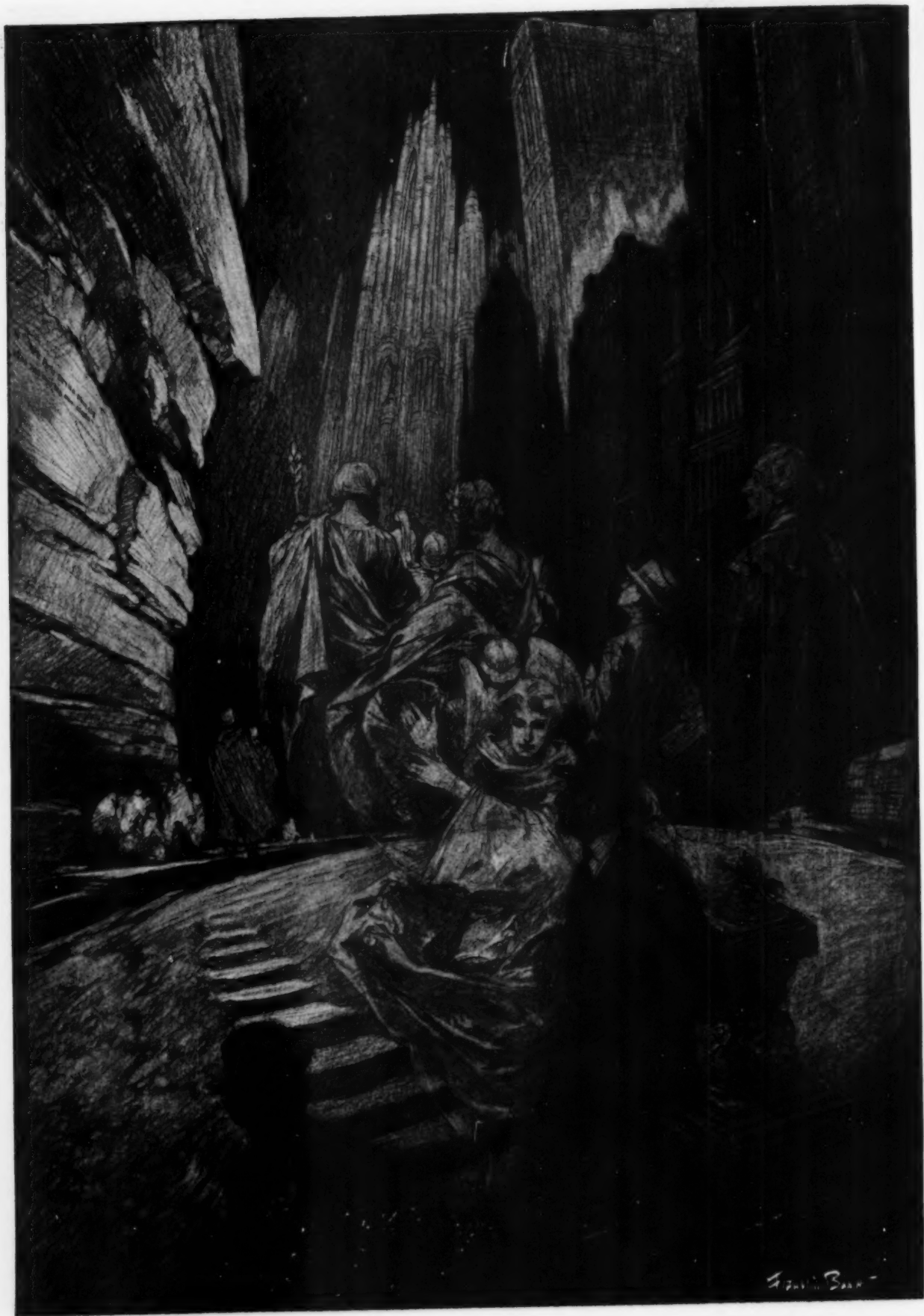


MARCELINE DAY

Film Star

Photograph by Schellenberg, Los Angeles





F. B. B. B.

# Miracle Workers

By Angelo Patri

Decoration by Franklin Booth

A MAN is what he does. His work is his life. Most of us never truly live, because we are so afraid to die. We are forever wishing ourselves forward and forever retreating to the safety of certainty. We spend our days furtively, one eye on the familiar path, the other on the alluring and dangerous trail that leads over the brim of the world to that delightful place where wonders are usual and miracles not rare. Like Alice in Wonderland we nibble on courage until we rise to towering heights—we can almost see over the edge; then, aghast at our own shadow, we hastily gulp down a morsel of fear and shrink to familiar and comfortable littleness.

It takes courage to live and to do a day's work. It takes more courage to stretch the day's work out beyond ourselves until it carries us into an open field where there are no guideposts and no trails, nothing but a waiting silence. We are alone with our work in our hands, and our spirits groping off in the infinite. If we take another nibble of courage and choke down the panic and push the job ahead of us, we shall see a miracle and set up a new landmark.

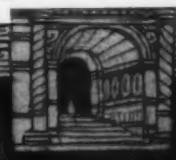
Why not? Miracles have happened and will happen again. Once a wellspring gushed from a rock in the desert; once the sea stood back while a people marched over dry-shod; once a pillar of fire led the way by night through the wilderness. All things are possible to the high-spirited. Washington crossed the ice-jammed river and took Trenton. Kasson and his good dog Balto reached Nome with the precious serum. Miracles are wrought every day.

They who cross the line of safety to go in search of miracles will surely meet them. They are wrought in moments of grave peril, in the time of extremity when the brave soul has staked all it is and has been or hopes to be, on the venture. It is then that the rock opens and the spring gushes forth. Why not for you?

You are in yourself a miracle. You do not know where you came from nor where you are going. You do not know when you are going nor how you are to go. It is certain that you came into this world and that, one day, you will go from it. But not yet, if you will it so. Not until you have really lived your minute and seen your miracle work.

Why so fearful? The great divides of life are marked by the breadth of a hair. Comedy merges into tragedy, and smiles put rainbows in our tears. Doubt trembles on the lips of faith, and Death and Life are shadowy sisters whose faces we have never seen fairly. It may be that in guarding the passage of our fears we are blocking our own path toward the very thing we crave.

Then at least we can live bravely. We can take our work in our hands and go on, on past the barriers, for beyond them miracles begin. We can dare and we can adventure, for we know that here is neither beginning nor end, nothing but a promise, a hope and a wondrous miracle.



# You

by Edgar A. Guest

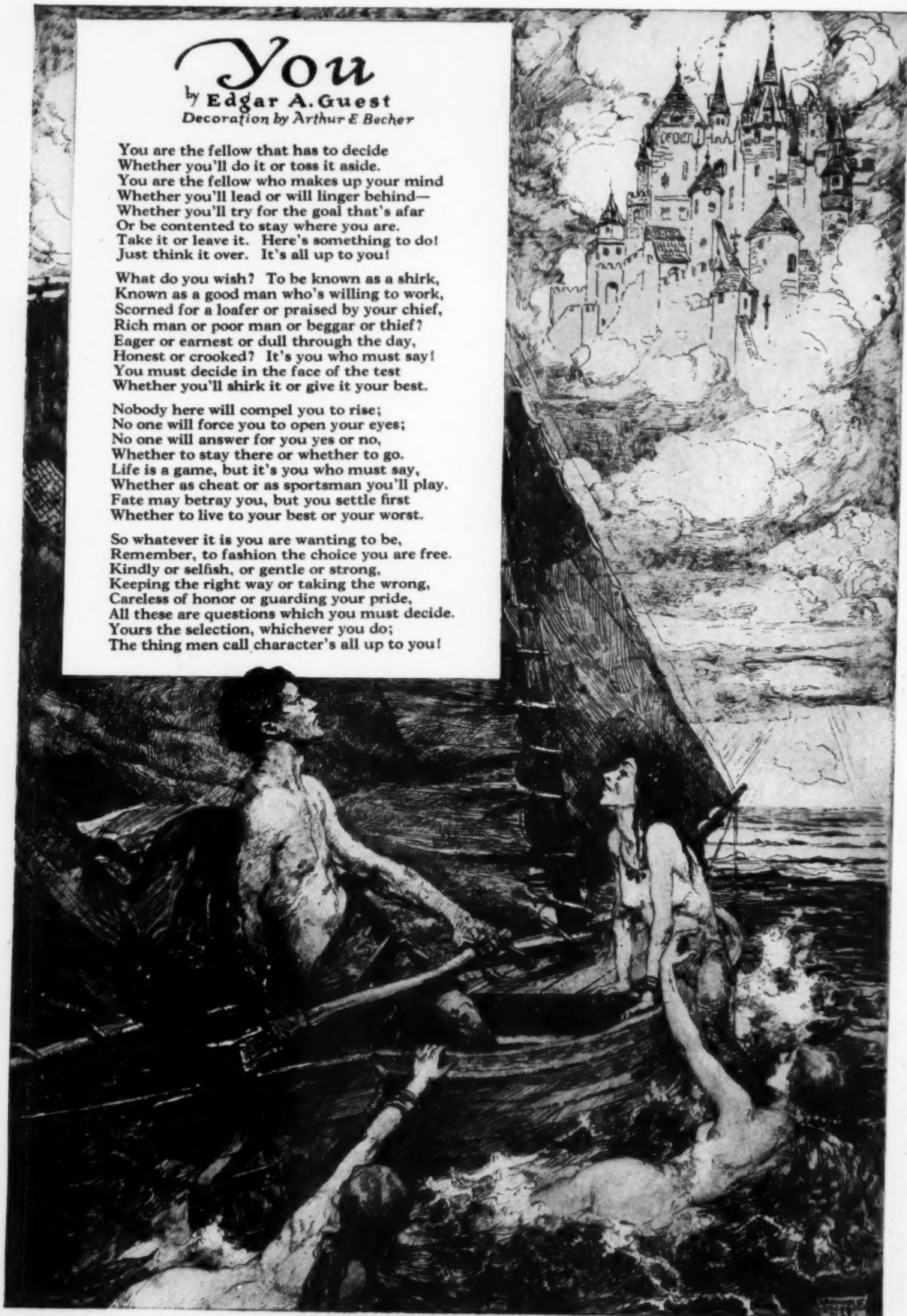
Decoration by Arthur E. Becher

You are the fellow that has to decide  
Whether you'll do it or toss it aside.  
You are the fellow who makes up your mind  
Whether you'll lead or will linger behind—  
Whether you'll try for the goal that's afar  
Or be contented to stay where you are.  
Take it or leave it. Here's something to do!  
Just think it over. It's all up to you!

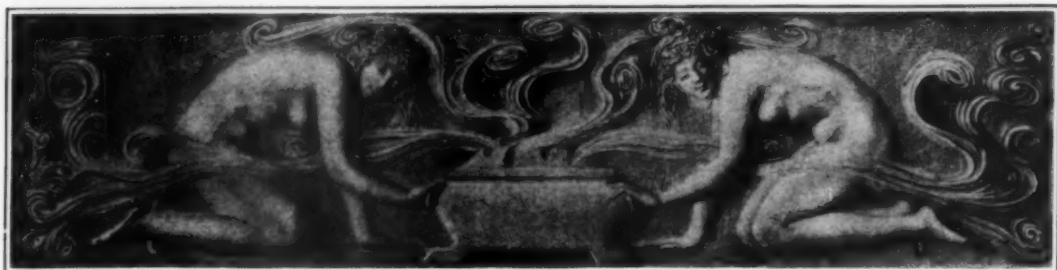
What do you wish? To be known as a shirk,  
Known as a good man who's willing to work,  
Scorned for a loafer or praised by your chief,  
Rich man or poor man or beggar or thief?  
Eager or earnest or dull through the day,  
Honest or crooked? It's you who must say!  
You must decide in the face of the test  
Whether you'll shirk it or give it your best.

Nobody here will compel you to rise;  
No one will force you to open your eyes;  
No one will answer for you yes or no,  
Whether to stay there or whether to go.  
Life is a game, but it's you who must say,  
Whether as cheat or as sportsman you'll play.  
Fate may betray you, but you settle first  
Whether to live to your best or your worst.

So whatever it is you are wanting to be,  
Remember, to fashion the choice you are free.  
Kindly or selfish, or gentle or strong,  
Keeping the right way or taking the wrong,  
Careless of honor or guarding your pride,  
All these are questions which you must decide.  
Yours the selection, whichever you do;  
The thing men call character's all up to you!







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THERE is one beauty standard upon which everyone agrees. That is natural beauty, a skin which depends neither upon lights nor shadows for its allure, nor upon artificial means for its charm.

More and more, every day, the world is turning to the natural type of girl . . . fresh, charming, and above all things, real, she attracts by being wholesome. Sweet and lovely, hers is the type that women envy, and men paint in mental pictures as their wives.

Yet that beauty is the simplest of all to attain. No costly beauty treatments—simply common sense, daily care with soothing olive and palm oils as combined in Palmolive.

*Try this—see what a difference it will make*

Use powder and rouge if you wish. But never leave them on over night. They clog the pores, often enlarge

them. Blackheads and disfigurements often follow. They must be washed away.

Wash your face gently with soothing Palmolive. Then massage it softly into the skin. Rinse thoroughly. Then repeat both washing and rinsing. If your skin is inclined to be dry, apply a touch of good cold cream—that is all. Do this regularly, and particularly in the evening.

### *Avoid this mistake*

Do not use ordinary soaps in the treatment given above. Do not think any green soap, or represented as of palm and olive oils, is the same as Palmolive. Palmolive is a skin emollient in soap form.

And it costs but 10c the cake!—so little that millions let it do for their bodies what it does for their faces. Obtain a cake today. Then note what an amazing difference one week makes.

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*Palmolive Soap is untouched by human hands until you break the wrapper—it is never sold unwrapped.*

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PALM TREE



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AFRICAN  
PALM TREE



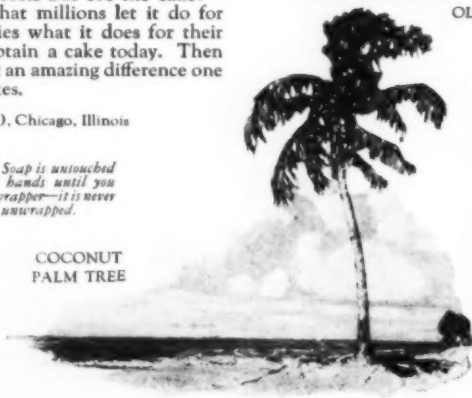
OLIVE TREE

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The only oils in Palmolive Soap are the priceless beauty oils from these three trees—and no other fats whatsoever.

That is why Palmolive Soap is the natural color that it is—for palm and olive oils, nothing else, give Palmolive its green color!

The only secret to Palmolive is its exclusive blend—and that is one of the world's priceless beauty secrets.



# A COMMON-SENSE EDITORIAL

By BRUCE BARTON

## "Everything's Quiet"

A VIGOROUS gentleman who was enjoying a brief vacation in Bermuda received this telegram from his office:

"Everything quiet here; better stay another week."

Within an hour he was on the boat bound for home.

"If they had wired me that they were in trouble, I might have told them to use their best judgment, and stayed on," he said in explanation. "But when everything's quiet—that's the only time I worry."

John M. Patterson, who founded the National Cash Register Company, operated on the same principle. He was amazingly cool in times of distress. But when business was prosperous, and orders rolling in, and everybody felt like taking things easy—then look out.

"It's the sunny day that brings out the adder," he would say; and that remark was invariably the signal for a general shake-up.

His only fear was complacency, which is the lazy habit of taking things for granted.

Nothing but death can be taken for granted. If you want an impressive reminder of that truth, go down to the river in New York and see the ferryboats rotting at their docks. Only a few

years ago the ferries were *the* gilt-edged investment of the most conservative New Yorkers. Bank presidents put the funds of widows and orphans into them. For surely New York and Brooklyn would stand there on either side of the river forever, and people must get across. Nothing could happen to the ferries.

But the bridges happened, and then the tunnels.

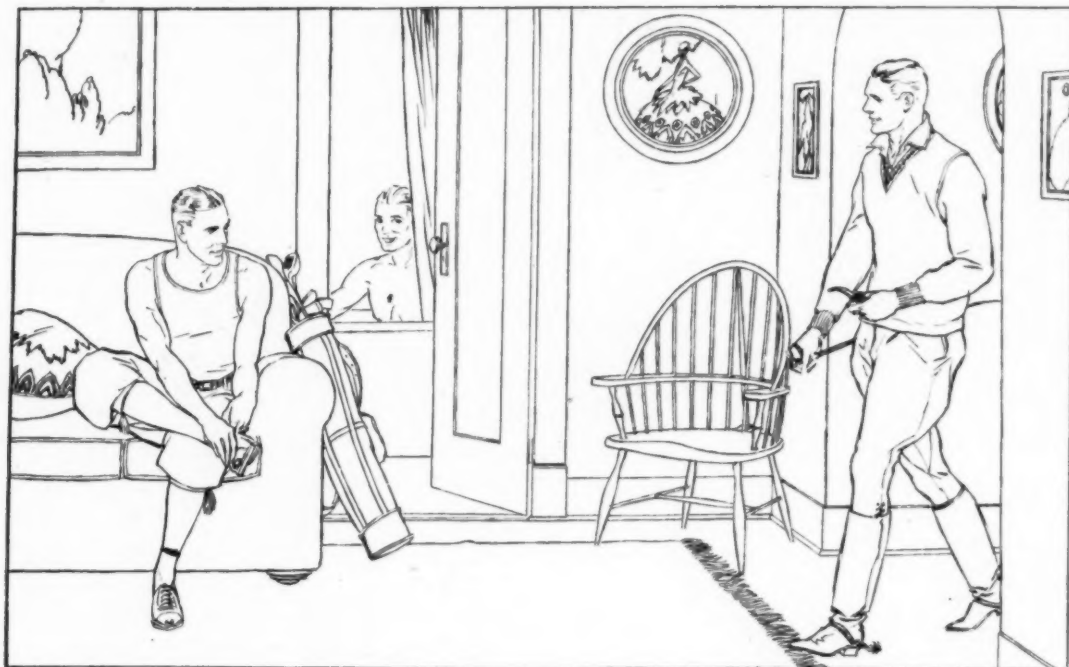
Immediately after the war I was asking Henry Ford for his views about the business future. "I don't know," he said. "Nobody knows; but I can tell you this—it will be different. Only one thing is sure in this world, and that is *change*."

Men whose mental being is attuned to change, who keep themselves in a mood of alert expectancy, and who manage to guess right more than half the time, are the ones who do the biggest things and make the biggest money. But the world goes hard with those who have no desire except to keep everything quiet.

"Why alter things?" one of the French courtiers demanded petulantly. "We are very comfortable."

A few weeks later his comfortable mind suffered a considerable jar. The French Revolution started, and they chopped off his head.





## To week-ending males

THERE may be men who enjoy diving for soap in a tub like pickaninnies after an elusive penny; but the week-ending bather who desires to approach the office force on Monday morning with the clear and compelling glance of a Big Executive will prefer Ivory because it floats.

The matter of lather is also important. Unless derived from Ivory, lather may mean anything from the square-root of minus one bubble, to a collection of oleaginous material requiring a patent skin scraper for its removal.

If a week-end guest enters the breakfast room with a frown powerful enough to crack an empty coffee-cup at twenty paces, you may rightly suspect that he has found the wrong soap in his bathroom. An Ivory bath would have prevented the frown and protected the cup.

Indeed, it is coming to be acknowledged as a scientific fact that Ivory bathers are the most durable and pleasant-tempered week-enders in the world.

PROCTER & GAMBLE

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IT FLOATS

TO week-end hostesses: Guest Ivory is not a guest cake merely, but when applied to guests, it is known to produce a gentle tolerance of ace-trumping.

# The RED BOOK Magazine

August 1925 • Volume XLV • Number 4

KARL EDWIN HARRIMAN, *Editor*

EDGAR SISSON, *Associate Editor*

## Flaming Monte Carlo!

The world's loveliest garden, yet one whose blossoms of hope only too often turn to weeds of desolation and despair. You become part of its hectic life in this latest story by America's most distinguished and most highly honored novelist.

Illustrated by  
C. D. Williams



"Deaf? Oh, no," she said briskly. "You wouldn't need ear-muffs if you were. You don't want to be bothered—that's all."

## Velvet Ear-Muffs

By Edith Wharton

PROFESSOR LORING G. HIBBART, of Purewater University, Clio, N. Y., settled himself in the corner of his compartment in the Marseilles-Ventimiglia express, drew his velvet ear-muffs from his pocket, slipped them over his ears, and began to think.

It was nearly three weeks since he had been able to indulge undisturbed in this enchanting operation. On the steamer which had brought him from Boston to Marseilles considerable opportunity had in truth been afforded him, for though he had instantly discovered his fellow-passengers to be insinuating and pervasive, an extremely rough passage had soon reduced them to inoffensiveness. Unluckily the same cause had in like manner affected the Professor; and when the ship approached calmer

waters, and he began to revive, the others revived also, and proceeded to pervade, to insinuate and even to multiply—since a lady gave birth to twins as they entered the Mediterranean.

As for the tumultuous twenty-four hours since his landing, the Professor preferred not to include them in his retrospect. It was enough that they were over. "All I want is *quiet*," he had said to the doctors who, after his alarming attack of influenza, followed by bronchial pneumonia, had ordered an immediate departure for warmer climes; and they had thrust him onto an excursion-steamer jammed with noisy sightseers, and shipped him to a port whither all the rest of the world appeared to be bound at the same moment! His own fault, perhaps? Well—he never

could plan or decide in a hurry, and when, still shaken by illness, he had suddenly been told that he must spend six months in a mild climate, and been faced with the alternatives of southern California or southern France, he had chosen the latter because it meant a more complete escape from professional associations and the terror of meeting people one knew. As far as climate went, he understood the chances to be equal; and all he wanted was to recover from his pulmonary trouble and employ his enforced leisure in writing a refutation of Einstein's newly published Theory of Relativity.

Once he had decided on the south of France, there remained the difficulty of finding, in that populous region, a spot quiet enough for such an undertaking; but after much anxious consultation with colleagues who shared his dread of noise and of promiscuous human intercourse, he had decided on a secluded *pension* high up in the hills between Monte Carlo and Mentone. In this favored spot, he was assured, no dogs barked, cocks crew or cats courted. There were no waterfalls, or other sonorous natural phenomena, and it was utterly impossible for a motor (even with its muffler knocked off) to ascend the precipitous lane which led to the *pension*. If, in short, it were possible to refute Einstein's theory, it was in just such a place, and there only, that the feat might conceivably be accomplished.

Once settled in the train, the Professor breathed more freely. Most of his fellow-passengers had stayed on the ship, which was carrying them on to swarm over a succession of other places as he had just left them swarming over Marseilles. The train he got into was not very crowded, and should other travelers enter the compartment, his ear-muffs would secure him from interruption. At last he could revert to the absorbing thought of the book he was planning, could plunge into it like a diver into the ocean. He drew a deep breath and plunged. . . .

Certainly the compartment had been empty when the train left Marseilles—he was sure of that; but he seemed to remember now that a man had got in at a later station, though he couldn't have said where or when; for, once he began to think, time vanished from him as utterly as space.

He became conscious of the intruding presence only from the smell of tobacco gradually insinuating itself into his nostrils. Very gradually; for when the Professor had withdrawn into his inner stronghold of Pure Reason, and pulled up the ladder, it was not easy for any appeal to reach him through the channel of the senses. Not that these were defective in him. Far from it: he could smell and see, taste and hear, with any man alive; but for many years past he had refrained from exercising these faculties except in so far as they conduced to the maintenance of life and security. He would have preferred that the world should contain nothing to see, nothing to smell, nothing to hear; and by negating persistently every superfluous hint of his visual, auditive or olfactory organs, he had sheathed himself in a general impenetrability of which the ear-muffs were merely a restricted symbol.



His noticing the whiff of tobacco was an accident, a symptom of his still disorganized state; he put the smell resolutely from him, registered, "A man opposite," and plunged again into the abyss of the Abstract.

Once—about an hour later, he fancied—the train stopped with a jerk which flung him abruptly out of his corner. His mental balance was disturbed, and for one irritating instant his gaze unwillingly rested on silver groves, purple promontories and a blue sea. "Ugh—scenery!" he muttered; and with a renewed effort of the will he dropped his mental curtain between that inconsequent jumble of phenomena and the absolutely featureless area in which the pure intellect thrones. The incident had brought back the smell of his neighbor's cigarette; but the Professor sternly excluded that also, and the train moved on. . . .

Professor Hibbart was in truth a man of passionately excitable nature: no one was ever, by temperament, less adapted to the lofty intellectual labors in which his mind delighted. He asked only to live in the empyrean; but he was perpetually being dragged back to earth by the pity, wrath or contempt excited in him by the slipshod course of human affairs. There were only two objects on which he flattered himself he could always look with a perfectly unseeing eye; and these were a romantic landscape and a pretty woman. And he was not absolutely sure about the landscape.

Suddenly a touch, soft yet peremptory, was laid on his arm. Looking down, he beheld a gloved hand; looking up, he saw that the man opposite him was a woman.

To this awkward discovery he was still prepared to oppose the blank wall of the most complete imperception. But a sharp pinch proved that the lady who had taken hold of his arm had done so with the fixed determination to attract his attention, at the cost of whatever pain or inconvenience to himself. As she ap-





At a late hour, when the Professor had become the center of a crowd of fascinated observers, it suddenly came back to him that a woman had given him that original hundred-franc note.

peared also to be saying something—probably asking if the next station were the one at which she ought to get out—he formed with soundless lips the word “Deaf,” and pointed to his ears. The lady’s reply was to release his wrist, and with her free hand flick off an ear-muff.

“Deaf? Oh, no,” she said briskly, in fluent but exotic English. “You wouldn’t need ear-muffs if you were. You don’t want to be bothered—that’s all. I know the trick; you got it out of Herbert Spencer!”

The assault had nearly disabled the Professor for further resistance; but he rallied his wits and answered stonily: “I have no time-table. You’d better consult the guard.”

The lady threw her spent cigarette out of the window. As the smoke drifted away from her features, he became uneasily aware that they were youthful, and that the muscles about her lips and eyes were contracted into what is currently known as a smile. In another moment, he realized with dismay, he was going to know what she looked like. He averted his mutinous eyes.

“I don’t want to consult the guard—I want to consult *you*,” said the lady.

His ears took reluctant note of an intonation at once gay and appealing, which caressed the “You” as if it were a new pronoun rich in vowels, and the only one of its kind in the world.

“Eeee-you,” she repeated.

He shook his averted head. "I don't know the name of a single station on this line."

"Dear me, don't you?" The idea seemed to shock her, to make a peculiar appeal to her sympathy. "But I do—every one of them! With my eyes shut. Listen: I'll begin at the beginning. Paris—"

"But I don't want to know them!" he almost screamed.

"Well, neither do I. What I want is to ask you a favor—just one tiny little enormous favor."

The Professor still looked away. "I have been in very bad health until recently," he volunteered.

"Oh, I'm so glad—glad, I mean," she corrected herself hastily, "that you're all right again now! And glad too that you've been ill, since that just confirms it—"

HERE the Professor fell. "Confirms what?" he snapped, and saw too late the trap into which he had plunged.

"My belief that you are predestined to help me," replied his neighbor with joyful conviction.

"Oh, but that's quite a mistake—a complete mistake. I never in my life helped anybody, in any way. I've always made it a rule not to."

"Not even a Russian refugee?"

"Never!"

"Oh, yes, you have. You've helped me!"

The Professor turned an ireful glance upon her, and she nodded. "I am a Russian refugee."

"You?" he exclaimed. His eyes, by this time, had definitely escaped from his control, and were recording with an irrepressible activity and an exasperating precision the details of her appearance and her dress. Both were exquisitely harmonious and opulent. He laughed.

"Why do you laugh? Can't you see that I'm a refugee—by my clothes, I mean? Who has such pearls but Russian refugees? Or such sables? We have to have them—to sell, of course! You don't care to buy my sables, do you? For you they would be only six thousand pounds cash. No, I thought not. It's my duty to ask—but I didn't suppose they would interest you. The Paris and London jewelers farm out the pearls to us; the big dress-makers supply the furs. For of course we've all sold the originals long ago. And really I've been rather successful. I placed two sets of silver fox and a rope of pearls last week at Monte Carlo. Ah, that fatal place! I gambled away the whole of my commission the same night. . . . But I'm forgetting to tell you how you've already helped me."

She paused to draw breath, and in the pause the Professor, who had kept his hand on his loosened ear-muff, slipped it back over his ear.

"I wear these," he said coldly, "to avoid argument."

With a flick she had it off again. "I wasn't going to argue—I was only going to thank you."

"I can't conceive for what. In any case I don't want to be thanked."

Her brows gathered resentfully. "Why did you ask to be, then?" she snapped; and opening a bejeweled wrist-bag, she drew forth from a smother of cigarette-papers and pawn-tickets a slip of paper on which her astonished companion read a phrase written in a pointed feminine hand, but signed with his own name.

"There!"

THE PROFESSOR took the paper and scanned it indignantly. "This copy of 'The Elimination of Phenomena' was presented by Professor Loring G. Hibbart, of Purewater University, Clio, N. Y., to the library of the American Y. M. C. A. Refugee Center at Odessa."

"A word of appreciation, sent by any reader to the above address, would greatly gratify Loring G. Hibbart."

"There!" she repeated. "Why did you ask to be thanked if you didn't want to be? What else does 'greatly gratify' mean? I couldn't write to you from Odessa because I hadn't the money to buy a stamp; but I've longed ever since to tell you what your book did for me. It simply changed my whole life—books do sometimes, you know. I saw everything differently—even our Refugee Center! I decided at once to give up my lover and divorce my husband. Those were my two first Eliminations." She smiled retrospectively. "But you mustn't think I'm a frivolous person. I have my degree as a Doctor of Philosophy—I took it at sixteen, at the University of Moscow. I gave up philosophy the year after for sculpture; then for mathematics and love. For a year I loved. After that I married Prince Balalatsky. He was my cousin, and enormously wealthy. I need not have divorced him, as it turned out, for he was soon

afterward buried alive by the Bolsheviks. But how could I foresee it? And your book had made me feel—"

"Good gracious!" the author of the book interrupted desperately. "You don't suppose I wrote that rubbish about wanting to be thanked, do you?"

"Didn't you? How could I tell? Almost all the things we got from America came with little labels like that. You all seemed to think we were sitting before well-supplied desks, with fountain pens and stamp-cases from Bond Street in our pockets. I remember once getting a lipstick and a Bernard Shaw calendar labeled: 'If the refugee who receives these would write a line of thanks to little Sadie Burt of Meropee Junction, Ga., who bought them out of her own savings by giving up chewing-gum for a whole month, it would make a little American girl very happy.' Of course I was sorry not to be able to write to little Sadie." She broke off, and then added: "Do you know, I was sure you were my Professor as soon as I saw your name on your suitcase?"

"Good Lord!" groaned the Professor. He had forgotten to remove the obligatory steamer-labels! Instinctively he reached out a hand to tear off the offending member; but again a gesture of the Princess' arrested him. "It's too late now. And you can't surely grudge me the pleasure of thanking you for your book?"

"But I didn't ask—"

"No; but I wanted to. You see, at that time I had quite discarded philosophy. I was living in the Actual—with a young officer of Preobrajensky—when the war broke out. And of course in our refugee camp at Odessa the Actual was the very thing one wanted to get away from. And your book took me straight back into that other world where I had known my only pure happiness. Purity—what a wonderful thing it is! What a pity it is so hard to keep; like money, or anything really valuable! But I'm thankful for any little morsel of it that I've had. When I was only ten years old—"

BUT suddenly she drew back and nestled down into her lustrous furs. "You thought I was going to tell you the story of my life? No. Put your ear-muffs on again. I know why you wear them—because you're planning a new book. Is it not so? You see, I can read your thoughts. Go on—do! I would rather assist at the birth of a masterpiece than chatter about my own insignificant affairs."

The Professor smiled. If she thought masterpieces were born in that way—between railway stations, and in a whirl of prattle! Yet he was not wholly angry. Either because it had been unexpectedly agreeable to hear his book praised, or because of that harmonious impression which, now that he actually saw her, a protracted scrutiny confirmed, he began to feel more tolerantly toward his neighbor. Deliberately, his eyes still on hers, he pushed the other ear-muff away.

"Oh—" she said with a little gasp. "Does that mean I may go on talking?" But before he could answer, her face clouded. "I know—it only means that I might as well, now that I've broken in on your meditations. I'm dreadfully penitent; but luckily you won't have me for long, for I'm getting out at Cannes, and Cannes is the next station. And that reminds me of the enormous little favor I have to ask."

The Professor's face clouded also; he had a nervous apprehension of being asked favors. "My fountain pen," he said, regaining firmness of tone, "is broken."

"Ah—you thought I meant to ask for your autograph? Or perhaps for a check?" (Lord, how quick she was!) She shook her head. "No, I don't care for compulsory autographs. And I'm not going to ask for money—instead, I'm going to give you some."

He faced her with renewed dismay. Could it be— After all, he was not more than fifty-seven; and the blameless life he had led had perhaps helped to preserve a certain—at least, that was one theory. . . . In these corrupt European societies what might a man not find himself exposed to? With some difficulty he executed a pinched smile.

"Money?"

She nodded again. "Oh, don't laugh! Don't think I'm joking. It's your ear-muffs," she disconcertingly added.

"My—"

"Yes. If you hadn't put them on, I should never have spoken to you; for it wasn't till afterward that I saw your name on the suitcase. And after that, I should have been too shy to break in on the meditations of a Great Philosopher. But you see I have been watching—oh, for years!—for your ear-muffs."

He stared at her helplessly. "You want to buy them from



He sprang up, seized the bank-notes, and crammed them into that crack under the door. The silence in the next room became miraculously complete.

me?" he asked in terror, wondering how on earth he would be able to get others in a country of which he did not speak the language.

"Gracious, no! I could make myself a better pair in five minutes." She smiled at his visible relief. "But you see I'm ruined—stony-broke; isn't that what they call it? I have a young American friend who is always saying that about himself. And once in the Caucasus, years ago, a gipsy told me that if ever I had gambled away my last penny (and I nearly *have*), it would all be won back by a pale, intellectual-looking man in velvet ear-muffs, if only I could induce him to put a stake on the tables for me." She leaned forward and scrutinized him. "You *are* very pale, you know," she said, "and very intellectual-looking. I was sure it was you when you told me that you'd been ill."

Professor Loring G. Hibbart looked about him desperately. He knew now that he was shut up in the compartment with a madwoman. A harmless one, probably; but what if, in the depths of that jeweled bag, a toy revolver lurked under the pawn-tickets

and the cigarette papers? The Professor's life had been so guarded from what are known as "exciting situations" that he was not sure of his ability to meet one with becoming tact and energy.

"I suppose I'm a physical coward," he reflected bitterly, an uncomfortable dampness breaking out all over him. "And I *know*," he added in self-extenuation, "that I'm in no condition yet for any sort of a struggle—"

But what did one do with lunatics? If only he could remember! And suddenly he did: one humored them!

Fortified by the thought, he made shift to glance more kindly toward the Princess Balalatinsky. "So you want me to gamble for you?" he said, in the playful tone he might have adopted in addressing little Sadie Burt of Meropee.

"Oh, how glorious of you! You will? I *knew* you would! But first," she broke off, "you must let me explain—"

"Oh, do explain, of course," he agreed, rapidly calculating that her volubility might make the explanation last until they reached the next station, where, as she had declared, she was to leave the train.

Already her eye was less wild; and he drew an inward breath of relief.

"You angel, you! I *do*," she confessed, "simply love to talk



about myself. And I'm sure you'll be interested when I tell you that, if you'll only do as I ask, I shall be able to marry one of your own compatriots—such a beautiful heroic youth! It is for him, for him only, that I long to be wealthy again. If you loved, could you bear to see your beloved threatened with starvation?"

"But I thought," he gently reminded her, "that it was you who were threatened with starvation?"

"We both are. Isn't it terrible? You see, when we met and loved, we each had the same thought—to make the other wealthy! It was not possible, at the moment, for either of us to attain his end by the natural expedient of a rich marriage with reasonable prospect of a quick divorce—so we staked our all at those accursed tables, and we both lost! My poor betrothed has only a few hundred francs left, and as for me, I have had to take a miserably paid job as a dressmaker's *mannequin* at Cannes. But I see you are going on to Monte Carlo—yes, that's on your luggage too; and as I don't suppose you will spend a night there without visiting the rooms, I—" She was pulling forth a hundred-franc note from her inexhaustible bag when the Professor checked her with dismay. Mad though she might be, he could not even make believe to take her money.

"I'm not spending a night at Monte Carlo," he protested. "I'm only getting out there to take a motorbus for a quiet place in the hills; I've the name written down somewhere; my room is engaged, so I couldn't possibly wait over," he argued gently.

She looked at him with what seemed to his inflamed imagination the craftiness of a maniac. "Don't you know that our train is nearly two hours late? I don't suppose you noticed that we ran over a large excursion *char-à-bancs* near Toulon? Didn't you even hear the ambulances rushing up? Your motorbus will certainly have left Monte Carlo when you arrive, so you'll have to spend the night there! And even if you don't," she added persuasively, "the station's only two steps from the Casino, and you surely can't refuse just to nip in for half an hour." She clasped her hands in entreaty. "You wouldn't refuse if you knew my betrothed—your young compatriot! If only we had a few thousands, all would go smoothly. We should be married at once and go to live on his ancestral estate of Kansas. It appears the climate is that of Africa in summer and of the Government of Omsk in winter; so our plan is to grow oranges and breed sables. You see, we can hardly fail to succeed with two such crops. All we ask is enough to make a start. And that you will get for me tonight. You have only to stake this hundred-franc note; you'll win on the first turn, and you'll go on winning. You'll see!"

With one of her sudden plunges, she pried open his contracted fist and pressed into it a bank-note she'd wrapped in a twist of paper. "Now listen; this is my address at Cannes. Princess Balala—oh, here's the station! Good-by, guardian angel. No, *au revoir*; I shall see you soon. They call me Betsy at the dressmaker's."

Before he could open his convulsed fingers, or dash out after her, she had vanished, bag and baggage, in the crowd and confusion of the platform; other people, rushing and chattering and



tearing themselves from the embrace of friends, had piled into her empty place, and were waving from the window, and blocking the way out; and now the train was moving on, and there he sat in his corner, aghast, clutching the bank-note. . . .

At Monte Carlo the Professor captured a porter and rescued his luggage. Exhausted by this effort, and by the attempt to communicate with the porter, first in Latin and then in French as practiced at Purewater, he withdrew to a corner of the waiting-room and fished in his pockets for the address of the quiet pension in the hills. He found it at last, and handed it wearily to the porter. The latter threw up his hands. "*Parti! Parti!* Autobus gone." That devil of a woman had been right!

When would there be another, the Professor asked.

Not till tomorrow morning at eight-thirty. To confirm his statement, the porter pointed to a large time-table on the wall of the waiting-room. The Professor scanned it and sat down again with a groan. He was about to consult his companion as to the possibility of finding a night's lodging in a respectable pension (fantastic as the idea seemed in such a place); but hardly had he begun, "Can you tell me where—" when, with a nod of comprehension and a wink of complicity, the porter returned in fluent English: "Pretty lady? Turkish bath? Photographs?"

The Professor repudiated these suggestions with a shudder, and leaving his bags in the cloak-room, set forth on his quest. He had hardly taken two steps when another stranger of obviously doubtful morality offered him a pamphlet which he was indignantly rejecting when he noticed its title: "The Theory of

She addressed herself with streaming eyes to the Professor. "Oh, spare him! What shall I do to avert your vengeance?"



#### Chance in Roulette."

The theory of chance was deeply interesting to the Professor, and the idea of its application to roulette not without abstract attraction. He bought the pamphlet and sat down on the nearest bench.

His study was so absorbing that he was roused only by the fall of twilight, and the scattered twinkle of many lights all radiating up to the central focus of the Casino. The Professor started to his feet, remembering that he had still to find a lodging. "And I must be up early to catch the bus," he reminded himself. He took his way down a wide empty street apparently leading to a quieter and less illuminated quarter. He followed the street for some distance, vainly scrutinizing the houses, which seemed all to be private dwellings, till at length he ran against a slim, well-set-up young fellow in tennis flannels, with a bright conversational eye, who was strolling along from the opposite direction.

"Excuse me, sir," said the Professor.

"What for?" rejoined the other, in a pleasant tone made doubly pleasant by the familiar burr of the last word, which he pronounced like *fur*.

"Why, you're an American!" exclaimed the Professor with infinite relief.

"Sherlock!" exulted the young man, extending his hand. "I diagnose the same complaint in yourself."

The Professor sighed pleasantly. "Oh, yes. What I want," he added, "is to find a plain, quiet boarding-house or family hotel."

"Same as Mother used to make 'em?" The young man reflected. "Well, it's a queer place in which to prosecute your search; but there is one at Monte, and I'm about the only person that knows it. My name's Taber Tring. Come along."

For a second the Professor's eye rested doubtfully on Mr. Tring. He knew, of course—even at Purewater it was known—that in the corrupt capitals of Europe one (Continued on page 140)

**S**HORTLY after the publication here of this most moving of all the stories that have won fame for Gerald Beaumont, a film version of it will be made for later release all over the world. Out in Hollywood those who have read the story declare that it is destined to become one of the most thrilling, yet humanly appealing, pictures ever made.

Illustrated by  
Ernest Fuhr

# Heaven Bent

By Gerald Beaumont



**T**HE GREAT HANDICAPPER once summoned two souls into the Paddock, saddled them with vain desires, bridled them with human weaknesses, and on the same day sent them to the post to run their course on the race-track of Life. One was a boy, and one a girl, and Destiny drew a ring around them both to indicate a "stable entry."

And this is their story—the story of two "outsiders" in the Salvation Selling Stakes, against whom the opening odds were so great that it was a case of "write your own ticket." If anyone played them, it must have been an angel acting on "inside information." Otherwise they went to the post unbacked.

The "front-runner" in the tale should be little "Robby the Rainmaker." He is entitled to hold the lead while he can, but blame no one if, by the time the half-mile pole is reached, a girl should spring out in front to steal the pace away. This cannot be helped, for she is that kind of a lady.

Did one say *lady*? Well, never mind! All things will develop in the running of the race. The call to post has sounded; the field is going to the barrier; the Starter lines them up. . . .

Robby was born on a ranch near the Rio Grande and christened Robert Miguel Robertson. His father was a Texas ranger of Scotch ancestry, his mother a dark-eyed border beauty with Indian blood in her veins. His parents looked upon their first-born as the hope of mankind, but other children came along so fast and plentifully that Robby was soon lost in the shuffle. He ran away at the age of twelve, and a neighboring rancher finally dragged him home by the ear, thinking to relieve the anxiety of a worried mother. "*Gracias, señor!*" acknowledged Mrs. Robertson. "I did not know that he was gone. Excuse, please—I have many children."

At fourteen he was gone again, this time never to return—which was just as well, since his father was subsequently shot by bandits and his mother died of fever, leaving her helpless brood to the care of the county.

Robby had his mother's soft brown features and liquid eyes, and from his father he had inherited a love of horseflesh and roving adventure. He took up with a small traveling circus, watering and feeding the horses, and sleeping with the elephants to keep warm. From this humble station he was lifted by Brant Taylor, a shrewd racing man.

"Boy, how'd you like to be a jockey?"

The question unlocked floodgates of boyish ardor. Robby's

eyes glowed. "Boss," he quavered, "that's it—that's me!"

Taylor asked a few more questions, studied more closely the boy's small hands and feet, and then settled the matter by taking out guardianship papers. Robby's next three years, though filled with hardships, were bright with promise. No neophyte ever accepted instruction more willingly; no youthful artisan ever put more heart into his work. The day came when he booted home his first winner—oh, never-to-be-forgotten moment! He came cantering back to the stands, shyly acknowledging the tribute of the multitude, and with his thumping heart so full of emotion he had to bite his lips to keep back the tears. There was only one small cloud on the horizon of his happiness that day. Other boys, when they rode their first winners, rushed to the nearest telegraph office and wired home the joyful news. There was no one to whom he could wire. But love of the game sustained him, and fame and fortune beckoned him on.

Robby was a quiet little fellow, earnest and well-behaved. Early success, instead of going to his head, seemed to stabilize him. When obstacles appeared in his path, hindrances that might have well discouraged an older boy, he met them sensibly. Brant Taylor's horses were a very indifferent lot, however, and as Brant himself was sick most of the time, the stable met with little success on the big Eastern tracks.

Braydon, who compiled the official form-charts at Belmont, looked up one afternoon to see a slender youth standing before him respectfully, cap in hand.

"I'm Jockey Robertson, sir. Haven't been able to do much on this track, because my owner hasn't got very good mounts. But I think I could make good if I could just get a chance. I'd appreciate whatever you can do for me."

So Braydon, to whom no other boy had ever thought of turning, watched the lad carefully, with the result that the form-charts, by which all races are recorded, contained in the foot-notes adroitly worded references, such as: "Jockey Robertson rode a well-judged race. . . . The boy on Lady Jane got the most out of his mount. . . . Philip G. lasted well under Robertson's hustling ride."





A stirrup strap broke, throwing the boy off balance and putting an extra strain on Theseus' weak ankle. The horse fell.

These things were noted by form-players all over the country. More than that, the gray-haired Braydon, veteran of the field-glasses, took the boy aside and taught him what he himself had learned from years of observation. No one knew more about it than Braydon, for it was his job to lock himself in the "Crow's-nest," and with powerful glasses glued to his eyes, record officially the name and position of every horse at each pole from start to wire. This was done so that men might analyze past performances and wager accordingly.

"Concentrate on the starting post," Braydon would say. "That's where many a race is won or lost. Get that early jump! The instant the barrier goes up, *shoot* it into your horse! Take him by the head and fight him! Throw him into high, and hustle, hustle, hustle! Ease up at the first pole, if you want to, steady him down—but leave the barrier the way a sprinter leaps from his mark. Get that early advantage, my boy! *Steal it!*"

Following such instructions made Robby a sensation, the best post rider that ever danced his horse on tiptoes under the shadow of a starter's ribbon. The Bidwell stables bought his contract for ten thousand dollars, and gave the boy a small bonus for himself. Robby offered the money gratefully to Braydon, but the latter smiled and shook his head.

"No, no, that's all right—what the hell! But say—come here a minute. . . . Shake hands, kid. I—I like you!"

Robby, now eighteen, realized that he had reached the quarter-

pole of his life, and ahead of him a fast track stretched out invitingly. He had done all that the Great Handicapper could ask. The boy was in front, winging along nicely, with no pitfalls ahead of him that he could see. The time was at hand when he would automatically graduate from the ranks of apprentices—a year from the day of his first victory. This would come with the running of the Inaugural Handicap at Belmont. Robby had been promised the leg-up on the great stake horse Theseus, which was making a come-back after a long lay-off because of an injured ankle. Theseus was going to run in heavy bandages, though brilliant workouts indicated that the leg was perfectly sound.

"We'll come down in front," Robby told his owner. "Lay it on the line, boss, and trust to me."

When the great day came, Stuart Bidwell overbet himself, as sometimes happens when racing men forget that nothing is certain in this world, still less on a race-track. Jockey Robertson, a brave little figure in golden silk, came prancing into the sunshine astride the gallant Theseus. The field paraded to the post, watched by fifty thousand people, one of whom was a slip of a girl—oh, such a pretty girl!—*too* pretty! It was she whom the Great Handicapper had selected to set the pace for Robby the Rainmaker. This golden-haired, laughing girl, though she knew it not, was to serve as the other half of Destiny's stable entry.

She knew herself as Nell Wendell, thanks to a nurse who had

opened a telephone-book at random and appropriated the surname of one subscriber, and the given name of another. She was the unwelcome child of an "entertainer," who met maternity with curses, bequeathed her offspring to the attending nurse, and as soon as possible went on with the show.

Her childhood was like that of many another waif, though she was more fortunate than some, for at least she had a home, or what passed for one. The nurse who reared her was kind and motherly, but she was away the greater part of the time, and the child got most of her education on the crowded sidewalks of New York, stealing apples from the push-carts and dancing to the tunes of the barrel organs. Two characteristics developed early. Even as a scrawny-limbed, lump-stockinged child of seven, she was the queen of entertainment on the block, strutting around in trailing skirts and a bonnet, and "ballyhooing" for her own vaudeville show—"Admission, two pins!"

Beyond a bland confidence in her ability to entertain, she had but one other marked trait, a spontaneous sympathy for all unfortunates, human or animal. She was always on the side of the weakest, always leading sobbing children homeward, or fighting with the pound-man, or pleading with the harassed cop on the beat—"Please, Mister—don't lock that kid up! His ma's sick! I done it, Mister—take me!"

To which the officer would reply: "You're a good little sport, but go chase yourself!"

Adolescence brought its mysterious emotions, dreamy-eyed moods—quicksilver stealing into virgin veins! Glorious in her first party frock, she attended an all-night dance and was almost trapped by maudlin youths of her own age. Like a startled fawn she fled into the night and hid in the foliage of a near-by park, aware of danger for the first time, and listening wide-eyed to the hunters as they sought to search her out.

The exposure of that night brought on pneumonia, and for days she lay in a hospital. It was during convalescence that the idea of enrolling in the white-apron sisterhood came to her. Becoming a novice nurse was one way of working out her bill. It was a profession that appealed to all her instincts. She embraced the inspiration with the same eagerness little Robby had shown when Brant Taylor said: "Boy, how'd you like to be a jockey?"

And she found herself compelled to meet much the same drudgery and hardship that confronted Jockey Robertson during his apprenticeship. She met them just as bravely, but there was this important difference: Nellie Wendell was a girl—a very pretty girl, with an inherent weakness: too much heart and not enough resistance, "all sail and no ballast."



She yearned for the honey of life, to give and to receive—to flit from flower to flower like a restless humming-bird, never quiet, never still.

Elderly, grave-faced physicians smiled at her; young internes tried to arrange "dates;" and head nurses, grim-lipped and spectacled, tried to break her down—to crush with drudgery her joyous self-confidence and love of life. She was compelled to toil in the scullery, to mop floors, to sweep and to launder—anything and everything but what she most craved: to minister tenderly to broken lives.

Small wonder that this girl of eighteen should seek occasional relaxation and diversion, even at hours that were forbidden. At rare intervals she was able to enjoy an automobile ride or a dance by climbing out of and in the dormitory window. She was never caught, but she was suspected, and the lines of discipline were more closely drawn. Her days off were infrequent and mostly uneventful.

One Saturday afternoon when she found herself at liberty, Porgington, a young interne, with old ideas, called for her in a car.

"Want to be a sport?" he asked. "Let's go down to Belmont. I got a tip on a live one, and if he wins, you can pick the restaurant and the show."

"Oo!" said Nellie. "The races? Gee, I've always wanted to go! Can I bet too? Just a minute till I get my hat and purse."

That was how Nell Wendell happened to be among the fifty



"That will do!" the head nurse commanded. "Take off your uniform and leave this hospital at once."

now! . . . . Mother iv Mercy, who's that in front?"

The roar of masculine voices swelled like an organ note. Shrill feminine screams aided the crescendo. High in the grandstand a trembling Boston terrier threw up its head and yelled like a woman.

The gold blouse was still out in front! Theseus had shaken off his challengers and was drawing closer! Little Jockey Robertson was bringing him home!

Nellie Wendell's hands shook so that she could no longer hold the glasses to her eyes.

"All by himself!" said the young interne. "That's bringing home the bacon! That's—oh, my God!"

Only twenty yards from the wire and in full view of the stands, little Jockey Robertson encountered his fate. A stirrup strap broke, throwing the boy off balance and putting an extra strain on Theseus' weak ankle. The horse stumbled and fell, flinging a blur of blue and gold straight into the path of the oncoming field. Robby lit on his

thousand people who saw Jockey Robertson on Theseus leading the parade past the grandstand.

The girl's starved senses responded eagerly to the feast of color. The surging crowd, the blare of music, the momentary hush of suspense, and the gasp from a thousand throats—"They're off!"—all combined to set her emotions aflame. Wide-eyed and flushed of cheek, she stood on tiptoes, deliciously atremble with excitement, small hands clutching at the shoulder of her escort.

"Theseus!" she called. "Theseus, dear! Go on, Theseus! . . . Oh, I can't see!"

The young interne handed her his field-glasses, remarking contentedly: "Leave it to Robby to beat the barrier. That's him out in front—gold blouse and blue cap. He's got a tight hold—just galloping! They'll never catch him! 'Atta boy, kid—pretty work! Now, let him down!"

The field had turned into the stretch, and was straightening out in the final drive for the wire. Theseus held to his advantage on the rail, but three challengers came flashing out of the ruck, their riders' whips urging them desperately on. It was a spectacular challenge, and for a few seconds it looked as if the flying leader were going to be overtaken. The crowd stood up. "Crow's heaven" echoed to the frantic prayers of wrinkled old women who day after day sought salvation with a "long shot." "Merry Minstrel, will ye come on! . . . Oh, you Black Bess! . . . St. Peter, bring her home! . . . Holy heaven, don't stop

hands and knees, and no boy ever tried more pluckily to save himself. Even after the third horse struck him, he was still trying to roll out of further harm. Women fainted or hid their faces. Spellbound men tried to look the other way and couldn't. Not until the fourth and fifth and sixth horse had passed over him, did the crumpled figure lie still.

No one seemed to care who had won. All eyes were turned to where a white ambulance had backed onto the track. Police were clearing a path for the stretcher-bearers. Gongs sounded and the ambulance rolled off. The band launched into a diverting air. Up in the grandstand, the young interne slowly tore up a bookmaker's memorandum and allowed the fragments to flutter away.

"Well," he sighed, "that only goes to show there's nothing sure about a horse-race! I had that bet already cashed and jingling in my pocket. Now I'll have to borrow some dough. Wait here a minute."

The girl seemed not to hear him. She had sunk back weakly in her seat. Her eyes were large and humid, her face chalk white, and colorless lips moved in a scarcely audible whisper:

"The poor kid! Aw, that poor kid! Aw, gee! . . . Dear God, it seems like it was me! I can feel it right here!" She was pounding her breast with small fists, when the young interne came back.

"Still livin' when they picked him up," he reported. "Those little jocks are hard to kill. But it's a cinch his riding days are



over. Come on—I've dug up some dough. Let's get out of here, and scout up a drink. I've had enough grief for one day."

Porgington was a roly-poly individual, the sheik of Ward "A," and the nurses called him "Georgie-Porgie."

Georgie's idea of a good time was not particularly original, and before the evening was over he had come to the conclusion that he had not alone played the wrong horse, but had picked the wrong girl. Either that, or it was the right girl and the wrong night. Time alone could determine. For all his crude attempts to pierce the girl's reserve had met with no response. She seemed in a daze, from which lights, music and gayety, could not arouse her.

"Georgie," she asked, "why do such things happen?"

"Still thinking of that kid?" he grumbled. "Forget it!"

"I can't," she answered. "He was winning—he was doing his stuff! We were all cheering—I was so happy! It seemed like everything in the world was right! And then—and then—it happened! Seems like it just *had* to happen. Why?"

Porgie reached for a pickle. "Might as well ask me why they put the snake in the Garden of Eden! There's a crossword puzzle that stops 'em all. Solve it, and I'll tell you why the horse fell this afternoon. Meantime, my motto is, 'Laugh it off!' Come on, honey, kiss the glass and hand it over!"

But the girl shook her head. She had not yet reached the point where she could accept Georgie-Porgie's philosophy. Religion had played no part in her education, and now she was confronted with a problem in advanced theology, with none to help her save a "pudding and pie" individual who advised her to laugh it off. Nothing but the stark drama, enacted before her eyes, could have impressed her humming-bird mind, could have prompted that wistful, temporary effort to penetrate the veil of Infinite Intelligence.

She escaped from Georgie that night, went home, and fell

asleep murmuring: "The poor kid! To be snuffed out like that! Aw, gee, what's the use!"

Next day she learned from the morning paper that Jockey Robertson was still alive and lying unconscious in her own hospital. She had expected to find the entire paper taken up with the tragedy, and was shocked at the brief and inadequate paragraph on the sporting page. She sought further enlightenment in the official form-chart, and found but a single line in agate type concluding with the word "*fell*."

She threw the paper away, bitterly conscious of something unfair, something she could neither understand nor express. She fell back upon the all-embracing and repeated protest: "Aw, gee! The poor kid!"





Robby recognized in this white-faced favorite of Mexicana the lost mistress of his soul. "Miss Nellie!" he cried, and stumbled forward.

Four-eyes, I'd be a lot nearer to that kid. She hates me."

The interne nodded. "That's the penalty of being pretty. The only place in this hospital old Four-eyes would like to see you is on the operat-

ing table. Head nurses aren't famous for their warm hearts, but this one wins the polar bear rug. If they ever open her veins, they'll get nothing but ice-water."

A flicker of amusement lighted the girl's blue eyes.

"That's right," he encouraged. "Now you've got the idea: Laugh it off, kid; laugh it off! What's the matter with me serving as proxy for young Robertson? I'll appreciate the petting, and he's too weak to care about anything."

"The bell's ringing," said Miss Wendell. "Go chase yourself."

FOR nineteen days Jockey Robertson lay unconscious, while the Angel of Life defended desperately the gossamer thread that held body and soul together. Then surgery triumphed and the gap was closed. Miss Wendell heard the news from her friend the young interne.

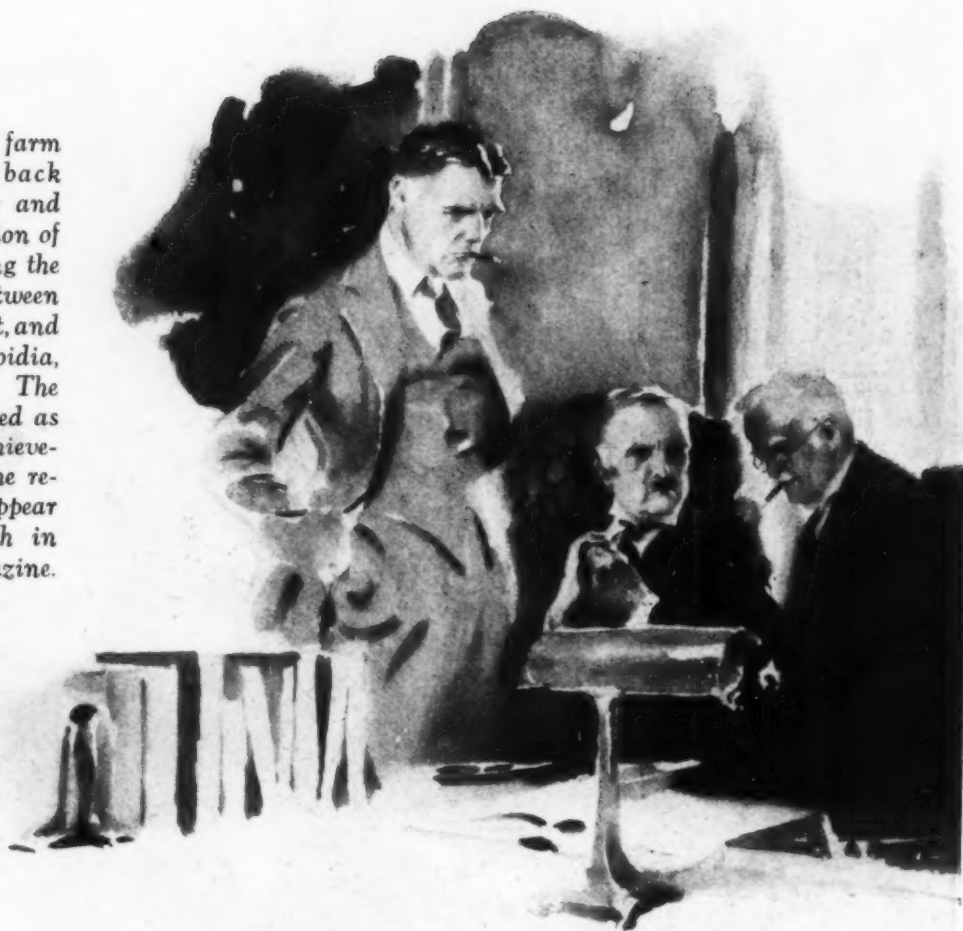
"Guess what his first words were?" said Georgie-Porgie. "Doc' Leonard told me about it. He heard him trying to whisper this morning, and he bent down. The kid was sayin': 'I could 'a' won easy. . . . I could 'a' won easy!'"

The girl's eyes filled. "Aw, gee—aint that pitiful! Wish I could see him! Wish I could nurse him! Don't know why I feel that way about that kid, but I do! I'm doing kitchen work on his floor. I offered to work nights, too. If it wasn't for old

THE early stage of convalescence is such a weary, helpless, soul-torturing process. The spirit flutters in its fleshly cage like an imprisoned bird that has glimpsed its distant home and with eager wings batters against the closed door. The mere effort to live plumbs the depths of exhaustion.

After that first muttered phrase, "I could 'a' won easy," Robby gave no further indication that he knew (Continued on page 116)

FROM a Michigan farm to Hollywood, and back again to her chickens and cows, defines the division of Miss Evans' life during the year past. And as between the pasture and woodlot, and the capital of Celluloidia, she prefers the former. The Pacific adventure served as a stimulus to new achievement, however, and the results of it are to appear from month to month in the pages of this magazine.



# The Little Devil

By

Ida M. Evans

Illustrated by Leslie L. Benson

THE conversation of the six men ceased as Linny entered the library. She strolled through the half-open door, raised thin black eyebrows in annoyance at finding the room occupied, purloined a few matches from her father's silver holder on the desk, and strolled out. She was a thin young thing, with a satiny mop of short black hair and an insufferable air of self-possession. Besides a purple silk handkerchief around her head, she wore a tangerine-colored woolen bathing-suit.

The day was too cold for swimming; therefore the six men charitably assumed that Linny wore her costume for convenience in some gymnasium work. Otherwise, Linny's garb would be immodest.

The six men were: Professor Ira Musmull, in his early seventies; John Hoterick, in his late sixties; Henry Bean, in his early fifties; George Gray, in his last forty; Burton Gray, who was twenty-nine; and Arthur Kemmer, thirty-one.

Professor Musmull was a Ph.D. and some other letters too, a very respected holder of the chair of economics in an educational institution—also Linny's granduncle on her mother's side. Hoterick, his lifelong friend, was a scientific horticulturist.

George Gray was Linny's father. He was in the lumber business. Henry Bean was his partner. Burton Gray was his nephew, and therefore cousin to thin Linny. Arthur Kemmer was a rising young architect and partner of Burton; their friendship was college-born. Kemmer was from another State.

Burton's attitude toward his slim cousin was ultra brotherly. He had set his jaws at her entrance, as if her bizarre appearance mortified him.

The two oldest men had seemed considerably to avert their eyes, as if in kindness to their associate, her father. Bean, filling his pipe, had stared grimly at her, tangerine snugness and all. So had her father.

Conversation was resumed, but on a tarter note, as if Linny had spurred six tongues.

"They roll their own," snapped Burton. "Let 'em hold their own!"

He had risen to close the door which Linny had left wide open. He paused, hand on knob, to snap his fingers.

"Well, as I was about to say," continued the neat, white-haired Musmull, "I gave out the topic for the thesis quite thoughtlessly.





Really, the subject itself was alien to the course. But my mind was on the feudal sources of certain modern laws. I was amazed at what was said to me. I make it a rule, you know,"—in explanation,—“to encourage perfect honesty of comment from my body of students.”

“I’ll bet the body howled!” Kemmer was amused.

“You’re quite right. One young man felt free to shout that there was no ‘such animal!’ Another chuckled: ‘Chivalry today! Oh, please let us instead write eight thousand words on the Probable Resurrection of the Crocheted Tidy and Its Effect on Interstate Freight Rates.’ Another said quite seriously: ‘We ought to get double credits for it, Professor Mussumull. Comes under biology, too. Extinct stuff, you know. Disappearance of it. Like our little toe.’”

“Clever lads,” said Burton

Gray, with the patronage of the succeeding-in-life alumnus for the existent classmen, a new and crude crowd, of course, but capable of development—perhaps—into rising young persons like himself. “Nowadays you feel like offering your young women friends more clothes—not chivalry.”

“Every once in a while I see that they still expect us to give them our seats in street-cars,” murmured Kemmer ironically. “I wonder why. None of them are ladies—”

“Of course,”—this murmur was elderly,—“the war helped.”

“According to some thinkers, wars are results, not causes.”

“It seems that some degenerate quirk of human nature has evolved—like a sixth toe.” It was Linny’s grunting father.

“Or grown out, like a queue on the soul,” shrugged young Kemmer, who had the forehead of a thoughtful young man.

“Cancer of the soul!” corrected Bean, grumpily. “Heard a lecturer say so the other night. World’s soul is diseased. Younger generation is the disease. Spots and all that, you know.”

“Whatever is the cause,” hotly broke in the prim, gray-haired Hoterick, who loved plants, “I find the young women of today insufferable. I have ceased giving them my seat in street-cars. Absolutely! I dislike to tell you something that happened to me recently, and which has about caused me to decide not to expose myself to further contact with them.”

Five awaited the telling, preceded as it was, on the teller’s part, by an elderly blush.

At a social gathering a few evenings before, at an old friend’s house, it appeared, he had been searching his trou-

Conversation ceased as Linny strolled through the half-open door, purloined a few matches and strolled out.

sers pockets for his handkerchief. He had a slight cold, possibly the result of pruning a hedge in a drizzle. A pert little person of the other sex had observed his search and offered to assist him. "Let me locate your flask, old dear, if your own fingers don't—"

"Young woman," he had roared, "I am getting my handkerchief to wipe my nose! Take your hands off my person!"

The speaker reddened—the fine, shamed red of an elderly and modest man.

"She was the grandniece of one of my oldest friends," he added with gloom. "I shall not of course give his name."

The middle-aged Bean muttered something that began with "Terrible—" Professor Musmull mentioned Mendel and frowned. "I admit—h'm—that regardless of scientific conclusions," he declared, "old ideals have been murdered, old impulses have been quenched. Quenched, utterly!"

"I don't know Mendel," burst out George Gray, a portly man who had been annoyed by his daughter's entrance, in her striking garb, while he and the others were enjoying a gloomy but philosophic discussion of several topics of vast import. "But I'll say the world's at a bad pass. And what can you do? If you thrash 'em, they leave home! If you humor 'em and hope for the best in the end, they call you 'old dear' and despise you."

"Fellow I know got married the other day," offered the younger Kemmer dispassionately. "Bookkeeper. She left him in forty-eight hours. Told him he couldn't keep her in safety razors."

Linny's great-uncle pursed his old lips. That very morning he had not been able to find his razor.

"If one dropped her glove, best glacé kid and Parisian stitched, I'm afraid the crocodiles would get it for all of my scrambling," yawned Kemmer. Linny's cousin gave a short unkind laugh and said in mock mirth: "Oh, Arthur, you mean thing! Wouldn't you scramble? Well,"—another laugh,—"neither would I."

Conversation presently languished. All were busy men. It was a Saturday afternoon. The two young men had called at the Gray home to discuss with the two experienced lumbermen a proposed new building the plans of which they had a contract for drawing; they were to spend the remainder of the day, evening and following Sunday perfecting drawings to be submitted to a certain committee on Monday.

George Gray himself was to take office that evening as incoming president of an important commercial club. Henry Bean was to be toastmaster at the club's incidental banquet. It happened that Professor Musmull was leaving within two hours to deliver an important address on civics to a learned society in a town sixty miles distant. Hoterick, the horticulturist, consulted his watch. An imported orchid was making its initial opening that evening; he was disappointed, as were one or two of the others, that his pleasure over the plant could not be shared by them.

**T**HERE was a general movement from chairs—but the movement was checked. A shrill, excited young voice was heard. It was at the telephone in the adjoining hall.

The door had not been quite closed, after all. Linny's was the voice, tearful and dramatic and rage-high. She might have spoken lower, or not at all, had she guessed her listeners. But their previous silence had pointed to departure from the room and the house. Certainly her recital of facts was nothing for a normal girl to wish her male relatives to hear.

"Anne, where've you been for the last hour! I've been hunting you like mad. Anne, I've got the damndest thing to tell you! You know that beastly little rat of a Hugg Brown and that big hippopotamus of a Bat Westby? I wish the two of them were boiled in ethyl! It was all Hugg's fault, though! I detest him worse than Bat and wish him worse luck! Because anybody with a grain of wisdom expects Bat to act usually like a snake in the grass; whereas Hugg has always pretended to be fairly human. That's what I said—human!"

The Anne at the other end must have made a friendly protest. Linny fairly shrieked:

"Well, he *isn't* human! I don't care *what* you thought! It's my duty to warn you. He *isn't* half-human. I wonder what his mother had on her mind before he was born. Something perfectly monstrous, I'll bet a pint! I told him so, too."

Anne may have put a query. At least four of the six listeners, who for various reasons did not care to interrupt the telephoner, jumped as Linny's cicada-high outburst tore into their ears.

"Good heavens, Anne, I'm getting at what happened as fast as I can. You remember last Wednesday night when we were over at Claire's till all hours and pretty squiffy—well, I wasn't

so squiffy, at that. I was just feeling a little humorous. And it seemed like a trivial joke to take Hugg's bill-book out of his pocket— Say, tell me, Anne, tell me this: would you or anyone else in the possession of your six senses expect Hugg Brown's bill-book to have anything in it worth a second squint from a primeval ape? Tell me!

"I give you my word, Anne, I thought it was only his cigarette-case. That is, at first. You know he's always got his good one in pawn and using some old leatherette article. And I must have been pretty woozy to go after one of Hugg's cigarettes, anyway—you know the brand he smokes. But anyway, that's what I thought I was soft-fingering from his pocket, and I had an idea of filling it up with dead butts. And I supposed, too, that Hugg was comatose—you know his weak stomach! But he wasn't so comatose as I thought. And he saw me take it. Or he says he did. I think some one else blabbed to him."

"Yes, Anne, you're a little Houdini. That darned piece of leather was stuffed full like a just-replenished gas-tank, and Hugg says he'll have it back intact, or put me in the hoosegow. Hugg is a cobra! I don't know how he ever got into our crowd! You know, Anne, our crowd may have its faults. But most of it is human, Anne. *Human!*"

**L**INNY'S youthful voice seemed to hold pure sorrow for one individual's lack of character.

"Hugg turns out not to be one of us. That's all. And as for Bat—yes, Anne, Bat took me home that night. And in the car he used force—took it right from me—hurt my wrists, too. At that, I thought he was joking and would give it back in the end. But when I heard his unholy shout of joy at the contents—and when I got a glimpse of the platinum chain itself—Can't you guess, Anne, what *that* was? Exactly, Anne! Hugg had sneaked it from his mother's jewel-case only three hours before. And you know Hugg was only one of several who had refused that week to lend Bat a few dollars—Bat was two hundred dollars to the bad over that motor smash-up last month. Well, of course, Bat must have been looking for just such a find. I wonder, Anne, who else in our crowd has paid and paid and paid for knowing him!

"I went on my knees to him last night, and begged him to return it to Hugg. And he said there was only one way for Hugg to get it back, and that was by Dempsey stuff—nice news for Hugg, who weighs one hundred and twelve, poor shrimp, with Bat tipping the Fairbanks at two hundred and ten, and besides used to be coach's pet at school.

"I've put my side of the case plainly before Hugg. You see, Bat simply defies me to prove that he took it from me. Still, that doesn't excuse Hugg, the toad, for ordering me to do the dirty work and get it back to him, or take the consequences. Hugg says, too, that *he's* got only my word that Bat took it. And he's let me have only twenty-four hours to return it to his own hands.

"What am I going to do, Anne?" A youthful voice became firm and vindictive. "Listen, Anne: little Eliza will get off the ice, all right, all right. She just phones you for a little aid. Claire Sloane is going to assist too. Bat did her some dirt once. Besides, I told her if she didn't help me, I'd never speak to her again and perhaps make her pay for that bracelet of mine she lost.

"You know, Anne, where Bat lives? That old red mausoleum on Elm Street? His mother's not at home this week, thank Fate. On a tour, I guess. You know she does something in politics and clubs. Anyway, she's out of town, and Bat put the thing away at home. He had sense enough to know that Hugg could get a gang and waylay him in an alley, if it was on his person. But last night Bat snickered that his dead dad's pigeon-holes were used to questionable fillings—wasn't that nasty of him, when everyone knows his father was messed up in an oil scandal just before he died? Some people have no sense of what's decent. Now, I never repeat anything about my father's lumber affairs, and he's always spilling deals to my mother, right in front of me. But it's lucky for me that Bat is less intelligent.

"And around ten o'clock tonight, while the swine and Claire are necking,—and she said she'd make the evening interesting enough to hold him in *her* father's library,—why, I'm going to get into the Westby domicile by that hall window and jimmy that great mahogany desk that Bat smirks over when he mentions it. I don't know a lot about the inside of the house—Bat's mother won't stand for our crowd's parties; but with a flashlight and a screwdriver from Mother's coupé, I can find the folding doors and the right pigeonhole, provided I'm not interrupted.

"And that's why I'm phoning you, Anne. Didn't you say that



Lights played over the desk. There came five grunts of satisfaction. A platinum link shone from a bursting clasp.

your mother's Minna is a cousin of Mrs. Westby's Greta? There's only the one maid on the Westby premises, and if she can be got out of the way. . . . Thanks, Anne! Thousands of 'em! I'll do something for you some day. 'By! I'll ring you around one A. M. and let you know if I'm at home or in jail. Hugg, the hoop-snake, is the kind to do what he threatens—and you know my family would *never* let me forget that my name was in the newspapers with headlines and all. That's the kind of family I've got!

"My nerve all right? Listen, Anne, the thought of headlines and jail can bolster anyone's nerve. Never worry about little coughing Camille— 'By!"

Click! The sigh of a girl. Light steps going slowly down the hall. The whiff of a scented cigarette.

In his library George Gray, his face flushed, said:

"Gentlemen, do not be alarmed. My young daughter will not housebreak tonight."

"How'll you stop her?" burst angrily from his nephew.

"Lock her in her room." Fingers snapped grimly. "I am glad that her mother happens to be away for a few days."

"She'll get out!"

"On her side of this house is neither vine, latticework, water-pipe nor outjutting brick. Besides, I'll station the gardener to watch."

Tactfully several men withdrew from the presence and the residence of that grim father.

**M**EADOWSTOWN has elm-shaded streets, high-schools, road-houses, a business college, two art galleries, many manufactories, bankers and old-clothes men, (Continued on page 150)



# Blue

EVERY year Roy Cohen indulges in a rather odd relief from writing. The first of each May, after an industrious winter in his home city of Birmingham, Alabama, he gets behind the wheel of his car and points the radiator toward New York. He leisurely consumes a month going and returning, and back home again seats himself at the typewriter with a revived zest. The long, hard driving would kill an ordinary man, but Roy isn't an ordinary man; he weighs about ninety pounds with his cap on.

FLASH MORGAN rendered his decision: "That idea about the Neighborhood Trust is all wet. It's nix, flooie and out. Savvy?"

His words circulated through the noisome, stale-beer atmosphere of the unsightly little room. They fell upon the keen ears of six young men, but the level gray eyes of the speaker were focused upon one of them—a tall, broad-shouldered, coarsely handsome young gentleman who answered pridefully to the picturesque name of Blood Moreno, and on occasion to other sobriquets and aliases.

The person with the sanguinary name did not accept the judgment of his chief without question.

"Why?" he inquired.

Flash Morgan's gaze never wavered from the florid countenance of his lieutenant. "Because I say so."

Blood sneered. "It's easy pickin's, Flash. A dinky little safe, a moth-eaten watchman—nothin' anywhere around but houses and grocery stores."

"Not a thing stirrin'."

"You must have a reason. You scared?"

One member of the assemblage who happened to be seated between Morgan and Moreno drew discreetly back. Revolt flamed. Moreno was insolent, Morgan deadly. The air of the rendezvous was electric. Save for a slight twitching at the corners of his mouth, Morgan was impassive. There was a shadow between the two men—the question of disputed leadership—a girl.

"I've said the deal is off," repeated Flash. "What are you goin' to do about it?"

It was a challenge, inviting action. Moreno was twice Morgan's size, with half his courage.

"Aint you got a reason?"

"Yes. And you know damn' well what it is. The Neighborhood



The gray eyes of Rariden did not waver. "You broke your word to me, Flash."

Trust is in the Fifth Precinct. Dan Rariden is police lieutenant there."

"I don't see—"

"You aint supposed to do the seein' for this bunch. I am. We got nine precincts in this town; you can work in eight of 'em. Rariden's is out."

Moreno leaned forward. He was afraid of Morgan—more afraid to show his fear. "Just 'cause you and that cop are friends—"

"Shut your big mouth, Blood, or I'll shut it for you."

Morgan didn't move—not a muscle. In physical power he was no match for the gloriously garbed Moreno, but Blood had never forgotten the Nicky Farron affair. Farron, twice Morgan's size, had disputed gang leadership. He had man-

# Steel

Illustrated by William Oberhardt

By Octavus Roy Cohen



handled Flash Morgan, beaten him beyond recognition. And just before losing consciousness Morgan had smiled—a twisted, horrible smile. "Better kill me, Nicky. You'll be sorry if you don't."

They hadn't tried Flash for Farron's death when it occurred six weeks later; but that, perhaps, was because when one gangster kills another, the police consider the world one gangster better off. The specter of Nicky Farron entered the room now and stilled the fury which was on the tip of Blood Moreno's tongue. He rose and passed out of the room. The other five, no one of them over a quarter-century old, crowded toward the door.

They were a queer group, young, full-blooded, clear-eyed, courageous, unscrupulous: knights-errant of the underworld—a warped and twisted crowd who worshiped false gods and were loyal only to the standard of the gang. They were malleable, asking only to be led by the strongest, not caring who that strongest might be. At the moment it was Flash Morgan. Tomorrow—

Flash Morgan sat alone, immobile, inscrutable. As the door closed gently and respectfully behind the last of his departing henchmen, a faint smile played about the corners of Morgan's lips. He crossed to a mirror which hung on the wall, and sur-

veyed himself: saw himself in a glamorous rose-light—youthful and fearless and most wonderfully dressed in clothes which shrieked to high heaven. "I guess," he reflected, "that Mr. Blood Moreno will sit tight for a little while now, the dirty—" And Flash proceeded to express his candid opinion of Mr. Moreno and of that person's forbears.

Flash left the room, passed through a musty, dusty hallway, and shoved out through the swinging door which had once been the Family Entrance of Wink Sullivan's Saloon. Mr. Sullivan—whose nickname was derived from the fact that a tiny muscle in the lid of his left eye had many years since ceased to function—was very proud of the vile reputation borne by his establishment, a reputation directly attributable to the iniquities of the Greyhounds, that group of unmoral young gentlemen captained by Flash Morgan. Ostensibly Mr. Sullivan now dealt exclusively in near-beer and sarsaparilla, but actually neither the complexion nor the aroma of his private rooms had altered.

Mr. Morgan stood at the curb and gazed with sardonic disdain upon the squalid neighborhood. It was an unpretty place, cheap and tawdry and poverty-ridden; but it was the hard-boiled kingdom over which Mr. Morgan ruled by right of might, and he felt toward it a great affection and a great superiority.

Now, however, there came to Flash Morgan a softer emotion, a pervasive yearning for friendly converse, and so he wended his way through a welter of traffic, past malodorous delicatessens, aromatic poolrooms, gaunt tenements and undernourished humanity, toward the Fifth Precinct. All of Flash's world was a matter of police precincts—he knew no other boundaries.

The Fourth and Fifth precincts adjoined. A narrow nondescript avenue separated them. They lay next to each other, and a thousand miles apart, for where the Fourth was fierce and stark and primeval, the Fifth was soft and sheltered.

Ten minutes later Mr. Morgan swung jauntily into the Fifth Precinct police station. Several uniformed officers greeted him pleasantly enough, and he passed unceremoniously into the private office of Lieutenant Daniel Boone Rariden. Lieutenant Rariden was taking things easy, immersed in contemplation of the physiognomy of some erring gentleman temporarily A. W. O. L. from the State penitentiary, upon whose head a bounty had been placed. But at sight of his visitor, the big square-toed feet came down from the polished desk-top, and the big voice of the big man boomed hearty welcome.

"Well, doggone your hide, Flash, what's bringin' you here?" "Nothin' special." Mr. Morgan flung his hat onto the desk, lighted a cigarette and flopped into a chair. "Just wanted to see you."

Rariden's eyes softened. "Aint things runnin' right down in the Fourth?"

"Yeh. They're all right—kind of."

Silence fell between them; each seemed to derive comfort from the wordless communion. The room was fragrant with the air of friendship—friendship between policeman and gangster.

Some men are born crooked. And some are born policemen. Daniel Boone Rariden was one of the latter. A product of the grim Fourth, he never had been of the Fourth. Since barefoot days, Morgan and Rariden had fought each other's battles; there had been always between them a love which passeth understanding—so foreign to each other were their natures. For where Flash was by instinct and training a criminal, a violator of laws, a natural and instinctive enemy of the police, Daniel Boone Rariden gravitated toward the uniformed guardians of public peace.

To Flash and the other members of the gang, the word *policeman* was synonymous with *enemy*. As kids they had delighted to make life miserable for the patrolmen on their block. They hated policemen fiercely and unaffectedly. But Dan Rariden was different. The blue uniform fascinated him; he made friends with patrolmen, and spent his leisure hours in the vicinity of the precinct station. He developed a passionate ambition to obtain, some day, a berth on the force.

It was not that he was morally opposed to the iniquities of his boy friends, or that he was naturally any better than they; it was that he was by nature a policeman, possessed of the peculiar and distinctive police psychology which basically has nothing whatever to do with ethics. A true policeman enjoys an arrest with an enjoyment which contains no malice toward the person arrested—just as a true warrior enjoys slaying an enemy whom he does not know.

The boys grew. Flash Morgan bit and tore and battered his way into the leadership of the Greyhounds. Dan Rariden made the Force. Each was brilliant: Flash fearless, daring, ingenious, reckless; Dan sober, grave, ambitious, indomitable. Dan won his uniform at the time Morgan ascended to the captaincy of the Greyhounds. Under Flash's brilliant leadership the gang took on new color; its robberies and holdups became more daring, its deeds of unrighteousness more insolent. Meanwhile Dan Rariden found himself happy in the uniform of a policeman, and he was happier yet when eventually they took the uniform away and made of him a plain-clothes detective. Through all the years the friendship between Morgan and Rariden continued; the gang did not like it, but it did not distrust; and when Dan Rariden was put back in uniform as lieutenant in charge of the placid Fifth, no one was more exultant than Flash Morgan.

Each understood the other, though neither could have explained what it was he understood. As to other policemen, Flash Morgan hated them passionately; and as to other criminals, Dan Rariden despised them and looked upon them as his natural prey. The criminal world knew that Rariden was hard-boiled, and it feared him because he had been born in the Fourth and been false to the trust of lawlessness.

"How are you and Moreno getting along?" Dan half closed his eyes, thus enabling himself to discern more clearly the granite hardness which came over his friend's face.

"Pretty good."

"He's bad medicine, Flash."

"Well, I aint no candy-coated pill myself."

Dan's voice was soft. "And the girl?"

"She's sticking with him. They all fall for that long hair of his. Oh, it aint the girl, Dan—it's everything. Blood Moreno wants the Greyhounds, and he aint gonna have 'em. But I didn't come down to talk about that. Just wanted to chat with you. Tell me all about yourself."

For an hour they talked. There was a gentle, quiet air of camaraderie in the room, a warm fullness; and when Flash Morgan left, he felt better. What a pity that their lives should have followed divergent paths—what a pair of gangsters they would



have made! And at the moment, Dan Rariden was sighing as he gave thought to the magnificent police material which had been lost when Flash Morgan elected to abandon the road of rectitude.

Of late, life had seemed particularly flat and stale to Flash Morgan. The Greyhounds were lying low. The Fourth was captained by the wisest and the meanest man on the force, and he gave the gang no opportunity for operating. Money was low, excitement lacking. The gang chafed. They looked to Flash Morgan, and Flash did not deliver—he was too excellent a strategist.

That night he drifted into the poolroom over Wink Sullivan's saloon. He selected an isolated chair and dourly watched the games. Peculiarly enough, no other member of the Greyhounds was present, but Flash was not thinking of the Greyhounds, nor craving their companionship. A fist fight broke out; Flash viewed it dispassionately out of the corners of his eyes, not bothering even to rise from his chair. He sat alone in melancholy grandeur, and it was there that Limpy McNeill found him.





"I want it all. It's going back. I'm handing it over to Dan Rariden."

*Chickhardt*

to give 'em action! Well, by—"

"Not double-crossing exactly, Flash. Blood's been spellbindin' 'em. He's a good talker, Blood is, an' he's got 'em all ribbed up that they aint doin' you no dirt at

all. Says you aint got nothin' against the Neighborhood Trust job 'cept that it bein' in Dan Rariden's precinct, you're off it, see? Reckon he thinks Dan wont never suspect the Greyhounds, knowin' that you aint botherin' the Fifth none. 'Taint the gang's fault, Flash—not a bit. It's that wavy-haired Blood Moreno who's got 'em fooled, see? Believe me— Where you goin'?"

"Out!" Morgan's voice was curt and incisive. "And get this straight, Limpy: you don't know nothin', an' you aint told me a thing, savvy?"

"I getcha."

Halfway down the stairs Flash slackened his pace. He lighted a cigarette and strolled languidly into Wink's saloon. There for a moment or two he lounged against the bar and conversed idly with Mr. Sullivan. He looked at his watch and then at the big clock on the wall.

"The old biscuit is right, Wink—fifteen minutes till one."

"Yup. Twelve-forty-five is right."

"Guess I'll hit the hay. A decent feller like I ought to be snoozin' at a quarter till one."

Having impressed upon Mr. Sullivan that he was among those present in the Fourth Precinct at fifteen minutes before one o'clock in the morning, Flash Morgan slouched into the street. Once there, the insouciance dropped from him like a mask. His feet spurned the pavement, and he only stopped running when he reached the garage where he had left the shiny little automobile which was his proudest possession.

Fortunately the hour was late and such policemen as he may have passed were indifferent to his fracture of the speed-laws. Certainly he traversed the distance between Wink Sullivan's saloon and the vicinity of the Neighborhood Trust in a trifle less than no time at all. He parked two blocks away, took his bearings and walked swiftly toward the scene of the proposed robbery.

The sedate Fifth slumbered contentedly—modest homes nestling cozily behind velvety lawns and peeping out through stately trees. Corner arcs spluttered importantly and shed little light. Two blocks away was the street-intersection which marked the community shopping center of the Fifth (Continued on page 158).

Limpy, in the vernacular of the underworld, was a thief—which means that he was petty and small and lacking in the colossal courage which gangsters must possess. Limpy eked out a precarious existence by snatching purses from unattended ladies, by sneak-thievery and by petty larceny. He was most decidedly déclassé, but the single grand passion of Limpy's life was Flash Morgan.

Flash was everything that Limpy was not, and Mr. McNeill bestowed upon the genius of the Greyhounds an uncompromising hero-worship which was not lessened by the fact that on two or three occasions Flash had deigned to do Limpy favors.

Limpy was quivering with excitement as he dragged up a chair and seated himself next to the dour chieftain. He was oblivious to the glance of distaste with which Flash favored him.

"Flash,"—Limpy's voice trembled,—"you better get busy."

"Mmmm!"

"Blood Moreno and the gang have gone over to crack the Neighborhood Trust."

Flash Morgan sat very, very still. Then steely fingers closed on Limpy's arm.

"That straight?"

"Honest t' Gawd, Flash. Blood an' the whole bunch; an' it's in Rariden's precinct, an'—"

It was characteristic of Flash Morgan that he thought first.

"If you're lyin' to me, Limpy—"

"Gawd! Flash—I wouldn't lie to you. I tell you, Blood and the gang—"

"You said that." Flash's forehead corrugated. Here was a situation unthinkable—rank, stark treason. His lips pressed together. "Double-crossing me, are they? Tired of waitin' for me

By  
**Harold  
Mac Grath**

The places around the world that are visited by the characters in this lively romance of mystery and adventure are as familiar to Harold Mac Grath, the author of the tale, as the stepping stones in his lovely Syracuse garden, where in a leafy bower beside the brook that threads the garden he does his summer writing. In point of fact, in all his two score books one cannot find a place described that Mac hasn't visited in the life rather than in the imagination. "When I'm no longer inclined to write fiction," he said recently, "I purpose writing guidebooks."

# Bitter



### *The Story So Far:*

"MR. THORNDEN," said young Wyncote to his father's old lawyer, "I have come to an unalterable decision. . . . I want it kept out of the newspapers—my father is dead; so I shall not add to the dishonor of his ashes by letting the public know I have repudiated my inheritance. . . . He left me three millions in trust. At my death, this income goes to certain orphan asylums. I wish to deed this income to the asylums forthwith."

For Wyncote had only after his father's death learned that their wealth had come from certain bucket-shops and other dishonest activities conducted under the name of Jarvis. And now that the world knew it too, he faced ostracism. As he walked down to Thornden's office that morning, he had had a sensation of being watched. Was he already beginning to pay for his father's misdeeds?

Thornden urged Wyncote to reconsider, but he persisted in refusing the money; he had a small income from his mother's estate. Thornden urged him, also, to go abroad for a time, but could arouse little interest. And meanwhile Wyncote's case was being discussed in another part of town by two very different people—a beautiful young girl and a dark Sicilian.

"I know you, Joseph," she said. "You would creep up behind him in the dark. Kill him before he has suffered? No, no! Kill him, yes; but a little at a time, for years. To break his courage, to break his heart—as mine is broken. If you harm a hair of his head till I am done with him, I shall curse you!"

"To kill him a little at a time," mused the man. "Brava! I begin to see. But you, singing in a restaurant!"

"It is all a part of my plans. Besides, with this money I can support myself. Mark me, he will come to that restaurant. I let him see my face this afternoon, and he will remember."

She spoke truly, this girl who was singing in a cabaret under the name of Belinda White. She had already caught Wyncote's interest. And skillfully she made his acquaintance, while he thought he was himself the pursuer.

And now two sinister threats struck at Wyncote: first came a stiletto sent him by Joseph, momentarily impatient of Belinda's slow method. And when the lawyer Thornden heard of that, a black-hand letter followed it—sent by Thornden, who was fond of the boy and determined to get him out of town. This threat,

Thornden persuaded Wyncote, meant danger to Belinda White also if he stayed; and so influenced, Wyncote took passage on *The Four Winds*—a yacht once owned by his father, but now in the tourist trade—for a trip around the world. . . . He was hardly well out to sea before he glimpsed, just closing her state-room door—Belinda White. (*The story continues in detail:*)

TERRIFIED, Belinda leaned against the door, though she had already locked it. He had seen her before her plans were matured! If she did not move and think with the uttermost skill, she was done, she had failed; and the grim Joseph would thrust her to the rear and take the affair out of her hands. Joseph's corpuscles were unmixed Sicilian.

For the first time she recognized a fact she had resolutely pressed into the background. She hated John Wyncote, hated him with an intensity which seemed to be burning her up; but she did not want him to die by violence. She might break his heart, spoil his life, but he would still be in the land of the living. Joseph had surrendered to her wishes; but he had got this sailor Stefani on board not for the sake of guarding her, but to watch her progress. Here at sea Stefani would be more or less master of his actions.

Irony, a maze of ironic mirrors whichever way she glanced! She herself was eager to make Wyncote's life not worth living, to kill him a little at a time, but not to wound him mortally. Joseph's way was merciful in comparison; but her American upbringing rebelled in horror at the thought of violent death. On the other hand, to her Sicilian blood, an oath was sacred.

If Wyncote grew suspicious and held aloof, they were both done; and for this a new hate was superimposed upon the old.

She saw, too, that she had been hypnotized from the hour Joseph had uttered his threat. When she had weakly protested that she was without plans for such a voyage, he had roughly told her that

# Apples

Illustrated  
by  
Lester Ralph



He reached Belinda as another green one broke over. The two of them were catapulted against the starboard rail.

these would come to her, once she was on board. And all these hours she had remained hidden in her cabin, searching and delving into her poor bemused brain for some logical explanation for her presence on board *The Four Winds*, bound for the world's end; and not a straw floated her way—nothing, nothing!

Without a logical explanation, what would he believe? That she knew of his millions, and had followed him, and having followed him, was something unclean. That was what he would believe; and she could not blame him for that. He had met her in a cabaret; she was legitimate hunting. Oh, she knew something of men, the masks they wore, the innocence they pretended, when they set out to destroy a woman.

He had told her, by mistake, that he was sailing on *The Petrel*, while this ship was *The Four Winds*; but that was no explanation. Where had she got the money for an expensive voyage like this? Without an ironclad explanation, she was done.

She left the door and stepped over to the porthole—from there

to her bunk—thence to the door again, the feline in her sensing the trap she was in. No mercy for the man in the passage, no mercy this side of death; but she could not have his blood indirectly on her hands. Never that!

A hand fell lightly upon the panel of the door. She did not stir. The hand fell again. Still she uttered no sound louder than a sigh.

"Miss White?"

The longer her silence, the longer her final explanation. "I am so terribly shocked!" she managed to say. "Tonight, after dinner. Please go!"

"All right."



She heard him enter his cabin and close the door. For several minutes she stared in the direction of the sound. Then she became conscious of the thing Stefani had thrust into her hand. It was a crumpled letter. She smoothed it out and read Thornden's steamer letter to Wyncote, confessing his duplicity in the matter of the false black-hand message—the letter which Wyncote had thoughtlessly crumpled and tossed aside, and which had been retrieved by Joseph's henchman Stefani. Her brain cleared magically. Nothing could be more convincing than the notion given life by this note. She sat upon her berth and reread the letter, her brain reanimated by all its native alertness. Even wireless could not refute her story. He should suffer infernal tortures, but he should live!

She wished she was all Sicilian or all American, that she might throw herself into this affair with all the fervor and implacability of Joseph, an eye for an eye in the Biblical sense, or hold aloof entirely and warn this poor fool of the danger which was closing in upon him. Made up as she was, with half-souls, as it were, one of rash impulses and the other of stern repressions, she was like some fabulous creature out of the days of the gods.

Where had Stefani found this letter which so miraculously smoothed out her difficulties? No matter; it was the key to the way out of this muddle. Trust her to tell a good story. Her confusion was gone.

CONFUSION, indeed, had crossed into Wyncote's cabin. The four winds of wonder had come at him simultaneously from their four points. Belinda White was on board! Thought proceeded thus far, then balked. She would explain after dinner—what? And what about the snooping deckhand? He had been in conversation with her. What about? She was American; the seaman was, or pretended to be, Sardinian. Wanting service, the fellow would be the last on board she would summon.

He could not thresh out the thing here in this stuffy cabin, and so he went on deck—without material benefit, however. From then on, till dressing-time, he wandered aimlessly about in a mental condition similar to that which had once befallen him upon the football field: he had been literally knocked out in the first quarter, and had finished the game without himself or anyone else being aware of his difficulty.

But there was one point upon which he could think clearly: Belinda was without a chaperon. If he acted as though he knew her, the worst possible construction would be applied to their companionship—that he had brought her on board. A damnable muddle! Thornden's trick had been offensive enough, but this twist was intolerable. Certainly he would leave the boat at Madeira. Damn Thornden's meddling!

He smoked till his tongue smarted.

At dinner he saw that Belinda was seated at the Herley table. Dear God, how lovely she was! But here was something of a solution. Tomorrow he could ask Henley to introduce him. He would give Belinda warning. He himself sat next to the moving-picture actress. He had to confess to a slight thrill.

"You remind me of some one," she said.

"Maybe it's your Peke," he countered gravely. But a chill fell upon him. He had his father's blond head and blue eyes.

She laughed. "No; it was some one of the collie breed. Blond men always confuse me. Your name is Carey?"

"Yes. And I do not have to be told what yours is. I've seen you often enough."

"Oh, on the screen. I see. I've run away, broken my contract. The imbecilic things I was doing threatened to drive me crazy. If they have movies on board here, I'll jump over."

"Leave the dog to me, then."

"You like dogs?"

"All kinds."

"Then you shall exercise Nanky every morning."

For a moment he did not know whether she was fooling or not. She read the frown which had gathered above his nose, and laughed again.

"Trust you with Nanky? I should say not!"

"Thanks. Then I sha'n't have to jump overboard."

"We're going to get along," she said.

"I hope so."

"Always tell me what you think and what you feel. I'm tired of the other stuff. And don't look frightened. I have no designs upon your young life. If I ever marry again, it will be to a man whose thoughts are a shade older than mine."

Ordinarily he would have greatly enjoyed this pleasant banter; but the thought of Belinda dominated him. He would wait for her to disappear; then he would search the deck.

He eventually discovered her by the forward rail, under the bridge, her collar up, the brim of her hat well down.

"There's been a terrible blunder!" she began at once. "You told me you were sailing on *The Petrel*. How was I to know the names had been changed? Why didn't you tell me?"

"But you? What are you doing here? I can't be seen talking to you, or the others will think—" He hesitated to go on.

"That you brought me on board?"

So she too had thought of that?

"I can't think or talk coherently," he said, gripping the rail. "I'm stunned."

"Thank your lawyer for what has happened."

"Thornden?" He was dumfounded.

"Yes, Thornden. He came to me about that black-hand letter. So sorry that I was dragged into it, and that kind of rubbish! In the end he offered to buy my ticket for this cruise and pocket funds beside, on the promise that I'd never communicate again with you. And fool that I was, I agreed. Why didn't you tell me?"

"But I did tell you!"

"You said *The Petrel*. I did not find your name on the passenger-list. Imagine my terror when I saw you this noon!"

"He wrote that black-hand letter himself to get me out of town—frankly, away from you. Why, in God's name, would he bring us together again?"

"I don't know!" Her anguish was not all simulated. There were saggings in her plot that desperately needed shoring up.

"Well, the thing is done. When the ship reaches Madeira, I'll clear out."

Would he? She would have something to say to that.

"I'll send a wireless to Thornden that will curl his hair."

"And he will deny everything." For suddenly all points in this comedy became illuminated.

"But I don't understand; it's so incomprehensible. What could be his reason?"

"My disgrace! I'm only a cabaret singer. He will reply that I followed you. Seeing me here would lower me in your eyes. I shouldn't be what you believed I was. Believed that you would take advantage of my impetuosity, and later abhor me. I'm from Broadway; he thought on that basis. Oh, I know. He will probably warn you against me and deny everything. I was so easy! All my life I've dreamed of such travel; and I jumped right into the trap!"

"God knows I'm sorry!"

Ah, that was better, she thought. He believed her!

"It promised to be a very pleasant friendship," she said; "but this man has destroyed what there was of it."

"But we can start all over again by having some one on board introduce us. I've met Henley."

He was hooked. She could have laughed.

"Whatever you wish." She turned and hurried aft.

HE did believe her. Why not? No reason on earth that she should lie to him; whereas everything pointed to the secret malice of Thornden, whom Wyncote's father had years ago robbed of his sweetheart. Sent Belinda aboard to try out the Jarvis strain! It was plain enough. So he entered the wireless room and sent a message to Thornden, which most certainly did curl that gentleman's hair.

In parenthesis, Thornden was unbelievably shocked, and his first coherent thought was that the Jarvis strain had swept the boy off his feet, that Wyncote had smuggled the girl on board and was now trying to save his face by shifting the blame elsewhere. But in the end he absolved the boy, recollecting the rusted stiletto. So he sent a wireless, denying *in toto* the accusations and warning Wyncote to beware of the girl.

The wireless man was greatly perturbed, but the ethics of his work forbade him to give this astounding news to his superiors. What girl? Going and coming, the messages had not indicated the girl. There were only four young women on board. He would have the chief steward watch this chap Carey, to discover what girl he was interested in.

Next morning, as Wyncote started his constitutional around the deck, he beheld an agreeable picture: Belinda standing before the actress' chair and cuddling the Peke to her throat. He raised his cap and stopped deliberately.

"I'm quite ready to give the dog his exercise," he said, smiling.

Belinda held the dog a little more tightly—the dog which was, in the near future, to save her from madness.

"Have you met Miss White? Mr. Carey. We might just as well know each other at once; there'll be four inescapable months of it," said the actress. "Don't ask me to promenade. My last



"What is it you wish to say to me?" "I want you to know that I haven't any of that money."

location was a mountain, and now I purpose to sit down whenever I see an empty chair. Oh, you may hold Nanky, if you want to," she added.

Wyncote took the dog from Belinda, settled it in the crook of his arm, and began to scratch its back. Nanky became his slave thence on.

Contact with him! Belinda shivered slightly. Would she be equal to the task, to hold him, yet at arm's-length, till she got used to the notion of having him touch her? The horror of a distasteful hand!

"Wont you sit in my chair?" he said to Belinda.

"No, thanks. I started to walk, but could not resist this doggie. I once had two of them."

Which brought to the surface the thought that he really knew nothing of Belinda's past; he could only guess that she had once known luxurious living. Well, four months stretched over considerable distance in time; and he would have her history. But as soon as he could approach her without seeming haste, he would certainly question her about that deckhand. He wanted that cleared up.

This thought happened to be in Belinda's mind too; and when the opportunity came, she adroitly anticipated him.

"You are puzzled about that sailor you saw coming out of our corridor. A friend of mine got him the job the last moment. To be alone, utterly, among all these strangers! He is going to act somewhat as a guardian. I never in all my life felt so rushed.

When I reached my cabin, I was utterly exhausted. And all the time I was worrying about the black-handers. And there weren't any; and I lost a good job. Please let our friendship appear to go along slowly. What a darling little dog!"

"And what a stunning woman!"

"She is old enough to be your mother."

He liked that. It suggested that she might be a shade jealous of his attentions to the older woman—precisely her purpose for planting the thought in his head.

Knowledge of life depends upon the number of experiences to one's credit. Wyncote could check against this account but few times; Belinda had quite a sum. Besides, all young women of twenty are superior in adroitness to all young men of twenty-four. Woman always has the advantage over man; she is the pursued, and knows at once whether she desires to be caught or not. Wyncote would be clay.

"I'll get acquainted at once with the other young women," he said. "Then, later, when we pair off, nobody will mind."

"And what makes you believe I want to pair off with you?"

"Aren't we old friends?"

"Why do you call yourself Carey, when your name is Wyncote?"

He hesitated for a moment. "My father once owned this boat."

"Why not take the benefit of the fact?"

"Do you read the newspapers?"

"Not always. . . . You see, there's possibility of my using 'Wyncote' without thinking."

He saw the abyss at his feet. Still, sometime, she must be told the sordid story.

"Did you ever hear of a man named Jarvis?" He did not see her hands shut convulsively.

"Jarvis? The name strikes a note."

She exulted inwardly. Here would be the initial torture: to follow the story from his lips.

"Did you ever hear of such a place as a bucket-shop?"

"That man?" She shrank away from him.

"I am his son. I tried to tell you back there in town, but I was afraid of losing you. It's pretty tough. Wherever I go, the thing bobs up. This man Henley—he used to know my father, has sailed on this boat, knew me when I was a youngster. But he doesn't remember me. Have I lost you?"

"No." The syllable was crisp; it was beyond her power to soften it. "Suppose we say no more about it? What glorious air! The sea—I love it!"

He was soon known to all the passengers. He had his father's charm. He was as amiable to those he did not like as he was to those he did. So he got on; the incubus let go a little.

One morning, as he took to his steamer-chair, he missed the actress. But presently she hove in sight, arm in arm with Belinda, the gray-brindle Peke trotting laboriously behind. They nodded to him as they passed. Then it was that he noticed a shining object lying on the deck. He recovered it before it could be stepped on; but he saw that it had already taken the impress of a heel. It was a plain gold locket. It would not open readily; so he thoughtlessly pried loose the lid with his penknife.

The locket contained his father's photograph.

## Chapter Eight

THE horizon rocked in a distressing manner, disobeying all rules of gravity; at least, so it appeared to Wyncote. His father's photograph in a woman's locket! His thoughts steadied once more, he decided not to take the locket to the purser till he had made some personal inquiries. This locket and its contents could have but one significance, that there was a woman on board who had known his father in such terms of intimacy that she still carried about his likeness.

Would the past never cease stepping on his heels? Some woman who had known his father, either as Wyncote or as Jarvis. He returned to his chair, stretched out and closed his eyes. He had taken this voyage for the sole purpose of getting away from it all, and—he hadn't got away from it.

The actress? She had said that there was something familiar about his looks. If that locket was hers, there would be no reason for her not claiming it. To her he was only a passenger named Carey. He would exhibit it to her when she returned to her chair.

Which time was half an hour later. She sat down, or rather she permitted herself to fall into her chair.

"There!" she said. "That will beat the ice-cream and cake I had for last night's dinner. Do you know, Miss White would screen beautifully? If my producers saw her, they'd go simply



woozy over her. She's a new type. And I can't arouse the least interest in her. She has beauty and fire. If I could take her to Hollywood, they'd give me a fat check for playing hooky. What's that you have in your hand?"

He held out his hand, the locket on his palm. "I found it."

"A locket? Some one has stepped on it. Have you opened it?" she asked. As he nodded, she said: "Let me see. Bad manners, but who cares?" His fingers trembled a little as he pried back the bent lid. "What a handsome man!" she exclaimed. "Run along and take it to the purser. I'm going to snooze now. Will you mind?"

It wasn't hers, actress or no, and Wyncote was glad of that. He liked this handsome, breezy woman; for some years he had admired her on the screen. She was something of an illusion, and he wanted to keep it intact. But he did not take the locket to the purser; instead, he took it to Belinda.

"I found this on the deck," he said. "Has anyone reported a loss?"

"It looks as if it had been stepped on," was her comment. "Have you looked into it?"

"Yes. It contains a photo—of my father. It's kind of hard. I have never hurt or wronged anybody." He looked away toward the horizon. "All the rest of my life—" His voice broke.

"Some woman on board who knew him? Of all things! But how shall we find her?"

"I don't want to find her, now. But I'll turn it over to the purser, and later he'll tell us. She may have been on the boat before, and have taken the trip out of sentiment."

"Where did you find it?"

"In front of Mrs. Channing's chair."

"She?"

"Oh, no! She did not recognize it. If it were hers, she would have claimed it. My name to her is Carey."

"Forget it. Let's get Mrs. Channing, and I'll play and sing. I feel in the mood."

"You're a good sport," he said, a bit choky. He was so damnable alone!

So Belinda got Mrs. Channing and went into the lounge and sang to her own accompaniments till luncheon. Rollicking jazz, little classics, homespun melodies—anything that came into her head. One thing came out of this episode: she was given the ship—she was free to come and go wherever she wished, bridge



Stefani struck with a bit of piping with which he was to fend back the panicky from the boats.

"Only a few. I see you know something about it. You'll arrive, if you have the will. You have all the gifts."

Belinda's expression became slightly ironical. Yes, she had the gifts; she had been told that before. Where was that beautiful world in which she had once lived? Had it been a dream or a reality? No worry, no care—only her great future to think of. Everything—then nothing. She no longer could daydream; she had lost the art. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. Or perhaps she had entered a horrid dream and had not yet been awakened.

As for Wyncote, he saw her again in the cabaret, the air filled with tobacco smoke; he saw her again at her door in a mean street. Two of them, Belinda White and John Wyncote, fallen each out of a familiar world. What might have been—they two meeting in their own worlds! Shining romance that should have been theirs and out of which they had been cheated. Tarnish that wasn't theirs, but which they must wear.

Thornden's money. Well, why not? A little stolen happiness that wouldn't hurt anyone. An electric thought! Supposing the old fellow had played this game merely to try them out, create a situation of extreme delicacy which would either make or break them? Somehow, Wyncote could not dig up anger any more against the old lawyer. To learn if they were worth their salt, if there was the right sort of moral fiber in them. Supposing

that was it? Of course, he wouldn't show his hand till there were results. But what an opportunity for a cad!

Belinda gone, Mrs. Channing voiced her pleasure. "The beauty of her! The voice of her! Did you ever see her like?"

"No," said Wyncote.

The actress looked at him sharply. "Don't fall in love with her, boy. She is ambitious. She will walk over any and all things to reach her goal. Belinda White—humph! You can't tell me there isn't foreign blood in her."

"She was born and educated in America," replied Wyncote. "Would a foreign-born girl take such a trip on her own?"

"Well, of course—"

"Would you call her a flapper?"

"Heavens, no! *La Tosca* is more her type. Perhaps her people are against her going on the stage."

"I believe she's alone in the world. Do you think she is selfish?"

"I said ambition.

Love kills ambition;

so she will avoid it. When she has made her debut, then she will turn her thoughts to love, and not find any." Mrs. Channing fondled the dog's ears. "I know all about it. What's your ambition?"

"I'm trying to write."

"Got anything with you, in your trunk?"

"You'll laugh."

"Indeed, I shall not. Bring up the stuff this afternoon and I'll wade through it. I can tell."

"That's fine of you; but I'll wager you'll find it rot."

"I'll tell you the honest truth."

And she did. Two of the stories were good; the others were very bad. Yet he was elated. Two good yarns out of seven was a pretty good average for pin-feathers.

"Have you ever tried to sell anything?"

"Not yet."

(Continued on page 124)

# Let's Go!

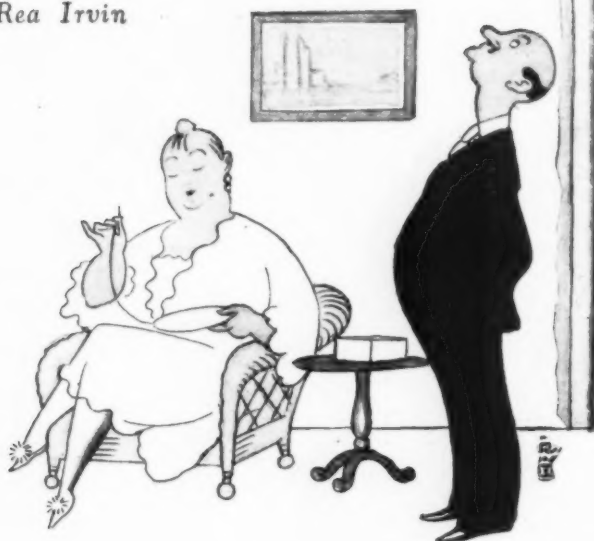
By

Robert C. Benchley

Illustrated

by

Rea Irvin



MR. AND MRS. WALTER PETERS of Dyke, Ohio, had made their tour of the metropolitan area of New York with considerably more success than they had originally expected. Mr. Peters, a quiet man with malice toward none except when aroused, had left a trail of dead and dying comparable only to that of the medieval Saracen, and thanks to his ministrations New York City was a much healthier and happier place in which to live.

The blood of the conquerors ran too swiftly in his veins, however, to stop with New York City. He had felt the soft yielding of victims beneath his rubber heel, and within his breast there stirred the knowledge that before him lay the world, full of pests for him to destroy. He was seized with something approximating a religious fervor directed at a cleansing of the earth of irritating people. He gave no manifestations of this crusading spirit other than a suggestion to Mrs. Peters that they go to Europe this summer. Everyone, he said, seemed to be going to Europe this summer, with the possible exception of the company playing "Abie's Irish Rose" in New York.

"We are pretty old to be gallivanting off like that," suggested Mrs. Peters.

"Not so old as Europe," replied her husband. And, after all, he was right.

"Where would we go?"

There you had the woman of it. Always trying to pin the man down.

"Don't they tell you where to go when you get there?" asked Mr. Peters, whose long and regular life in America had accustomed him to following directions and printed instructions pretty thoroughly, and had bred in him a fairly complete and affectionate reliance upon official surveillance. "Aren't there sight-seeing busses and things like that over there?"

"Yes, I suppose so," said his wife. "But you have to have somewhere to go when you get off the boat before you can take a sight-seeing bus. You have to find a corner where the busses

It was an inspiration on the part of Mr. Benchley to offer to accompany his friends the Peters' to Europe as their guest and guide; a pleasant time will certainly be had by all. And besides, Mr. Benchley will have an opportunity for an exhaustive study of the European theaters, preliminary to writing the play that a famous manager has commissioned of him, with the Peters' as leading characters. But more of this anon, as they say.

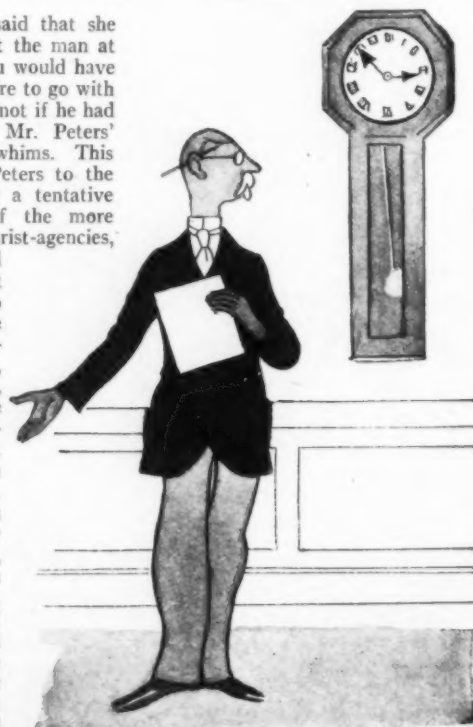
stop. I should think that Paris would be the place to go first."

"I should think so, too," said Mr. Peters, who was not so old as he looked. He was rather glad that Mrs. Peters had suggested it first. A husband should always maneuver his wife into suggesting places to visit. Then, when it rains steadily there for two weeks, or the heat proves so terrific that no one can venture into the street, or the food turns out to be uneatable, he can say, quietly: "It was your idea coming here, my dear. Remember that." Without this loophole, he might better never have left home at all.

"The man at the travel-bureau will probably know where to go from Paris," suggested Mrs. Peters.

"He won't come with us, will he?" asked Mr. Peters apprehensively, for he hated traveling with strangers, or in a crowd.

Mrs. Peters said that she didn't think that the man at the travel-bureau would have the slightest desire to go with them, especially not if he had any inkling of Mr. Peters' little homicidal whims. This reassured Mr. Peters to the point of paying a tentative visit to one of the more prominent tourist-agencies, where they found everything at their disposal to help them come to a decision—maps, charts, folders, pencils, and a very nice young man behind the counter. You might have thought that Mr. and Mrs. Peters were his father and mother, so excited was he in their behalf. (As a matter of fact, as it turned out later, the young man was their son, a son that they had



forgotten about.) In less time than it took Mrs. Peters to tell it later to Mrs. Freeman in Dyke, he had the counter covered with maps and steamship charts. He now inquired:

"Where do you want to go?"

"You must guess," said Mr. Peters, "and we will tell you if you guess right."

"Don't fool, please, Walter," said Mrs. Peters. Then to the young man she said: "We had thought that we would go to Paris first. After that we didn't know."

The young man thought that it would be a very good idea to go to Paris first. Paris, he said, is the most beautiful city in the world.

"I doubt that," said Mr. Peters, "but let it pass."

From Paris had they thought of Italy? Mr. Peters said that he thought of Italy constantly, most of the time unfavorably. There was a gayety about these sallies of Mr. Peters which was quite unlike him, yet which reassured his wife. Things were all right so long as he took the offensive himself. When Mrs. Peters began to worry was when her husband sat silent under the attacks of others.

The young man spread out a big map which covered both the Peters' in its descent.

"Now, here—" he began.

"Where?" demanded Mr. Peters.

"Here we can arrange a nice trip for you from Paris to Geneva, from Geneva to Lucerne, then by way of Meran through the Austrian Tyrol—"

At this point a large lady in black elbowed her way in between the Peters' and asked the young man if he would please see what he could get for her on the *Udombia*, sailing in two weeks.

"In just a minute, madam," said the young man. "I am taking care of this lady and gentleman just now."

The person in black glared at Mr. Peters.

"I have only a few minutes," she snarled. "I have never had such poor service as this, and I have crossed the ocean sixteen times."



REA IRVIN

"This will make seventeen, then, wont it?" said Mr. Peters. And then he added, softly: "They say that the eighteenth trip is very unlucky. I would think twice, if I were you, before I took the return trip this fall." Then, turning to the young man, he said with alarming politeness: "Please take care of this lady now. We can wait."

The young man was surprised, and Mrs. Peters made a feeble motion at protesting, but the lady in black took advantage of the opening with such alacrity that there was nothing to do but let Mr. Peters have his ominous way. He drew to one side and listened grimly to the sailing arrangements.

"I want an outside cabin on the A deck," said the lady, in a voice which could be heard all over the office. "My husband is in the Government service, and we are always given very good rooms whenever we cross."

"I am afraid that there aren't any outside cabins on that deck left, madam," said the young man. "I just called up the office about the *Udombia* only a few minutes ago. Here is the best that we can do for you on that sailing." He pointed with a pencil to a room on the chart and added: "These are very nice cabins."

"I wont take one of those," shrilled the lady. "I know what you do; you hold out good rooms until the very last. Please call up the office and tell them that you want it for Mr. and Mrs. Mortimer Leedish."

"It wont do much good," said the young man, getting red. "I just called up, and they told—"

"Please don't argue with me," said the lady. "What *have* you got an outside cabin on the A deck on?"

"I can probably get you something that you want on the *Lugantic*, sailing the following week."

"That's too late," said the lady. "I have to be in London by the third, as my daughter is being presented at court, and Mr. Leedish has to be there for a meeting of his engineering society on the sixth. Mr. Leedish is president of the engineering society, you know. We *must* sail on the twenty-first. If you could let me use your telephone, I could talk to the steamship office myself, and I am sure that they would take care of me."

Mr. Peters touched the young man on the arm. "May I speak with you privately for just a moment?" he said, with a gesture of apology to the lady in black. And before she could refuse him permission, he had slid the young man down the counter to a spot out of hearing. Here he engaged him in earnest conversation for perhaps three minutes. At first the young man seemed to be protesting at something, but then he gave in and left Mr. Peters with a grateful look in his tired eyes.



REA IRVIN



"Come, my dear," said Mr. Peters to his wife. "We will go down and see about our passports first, and leave this young man to the work which he has to do."

As they stepped into the elevator, Mr. Peters said quietly, as one who wishes to forestall any questions and dispose of the subject before it even comes up: "I would have done it myself, but I wanted to give the young man the personal satisfaction. So I just told him how to do it. No jury on earth will convict him."

The passport office was some distance away. It was just as far away, in fact, as it could possibly be, and still be in New York City. It was at the tip end of the island.

"If we had thought to bring our bags along, we could take fifteen more minutes and be in Cherbourg," said Mr. Peters, when they reached the Customhouse.

A sandwich-man parading up and down in front warned them by his sign that they must have passport pictures taken, and that, by going around the corner, they could have it done in short order.

"I guess maybe we had better not go to Europe at all," said Mr. Peters, who hated to have his picture taken.

"We have got this far—we might as well go on," said his wife. "I should hate to have had all this trip way down to the Battery for nothing."

So they climbed some rickety stairs around the corner and were roundly insulted by a photographer who knew very well that he had them in his power and that they had to take what he said without protest. And after waiting only three times the length of the advertised time, the pictures were delivered to them, all damp and clinging.

"There has been an awful mistake," said Mr. Peters on examining them. "These are not of us. You have given us somebody else's pictures."

"No, Walter," said Mrs. Peters. "That is you. See, there's your stick-pin. And my broach."

"We have been robbed," said her husband. "Some one has taken our jewelry and posed in it." He felt for his stick-pin, but it was still there.

"I have seen this couple's picture somewhere," he said. "It was in the post office in Dyke, and it was posted up over a reward for their capture, dead or alive, for making counterfeit money. I remember now. Their names were Red Keenan and Blanche Durkee, and they also travel under the name of 'LaBlonde,' as man and wife."

"No, Walter, I'm afraid they're us, all right. That's the way you always hold your head when you have your picture taken."

"If that's me, I take no trip to Europe," said Mr. Peters. "I go back home to Dyke and shut myself up in the trunk-room for the rest of my life. And if that's you," he added, "I'll have our marriage annulled."

"It's the best we can do," urged Mrs. Peters. "Let's go back and see if they will give us our passports on them."

"They'll arrest us—that's what they'll do," said her husband. But he went.

In the passport office they found themselves in the midst of a fairly large crowd of prospective tourists, all confused to the point of tears. In their turn they approached a desk where a young lady was handing out blanks.

"Are you two married?" she called out.

Mr. Peters blushed guiltily. "If we aren't, it's too late to do anything about it now," he said. Several women drew back from Mrs. Peters, suspiciously.

"Have you ever been abroad before? Are you native-born Americans? Are you traveling together? Have you any communicable disease? Do you believe in transubstantiation?"

These questions were fired at the Peters' in a loud voice which allowed of no evasion, and at a speed which allowed of no retort. At their conclusion a blank was handed to Mr. Peters, and he was directed to a desk.

The pen at the desk had been recently used as an olive-fork, and there was just ink enough to dampen the prongs. Unfortunately, a bad pen was one of the things that irritated Mr. Peters to the boiling point. He jabbed it savagely into the inkwell and began to fill out the blank. Mrs. Peters looked over his shoulder.

"You have put down my father's name where your father's name ought to be," she said.

"A fine time to tell me," said her husband. "Well, there it stays. We'll say that we both had the same father."

"That would make us brother and sister," Mrs. Peters protested.

"What of it?" snapped Mr. Peters. "Whose business is it? I'm not going to be scratching out things all the afternoon. What shall I say about my nose?"

"Large?" suggested Mrs. Peters.

"Oh, I don't know. It's not so large. Not anywhere near so large as your brother's. How about 'medium'?"

"All right, 'medium' then," agreed the little woman.

"I guess 'medium' will do for all these other things too, won't it?"

"I wouldn't put 'medium eyes,' would you?" said Mrs. Peters timidly.

"Suppose I put 'attractive' for my eyes. You used to tell me that I had attractive eyes."

"So you did, Walter. And you still have."

Mr. Peters put down the pen and kissed Mrs. Peters, thereby setting up a record for the passport office.

"I guess we've given them enough information," he said, and took the blank over to the young lady.

"Take it to Room 14 across the hall," she said.

At Room 14 across the hall a man looked over Mr. Peters' description of himself and Mrs. Peters. Then he looked over Mr. Peters. Then he crossed out Mr. Peters' "medium" after

"nose" and wrote "large." He crossed out "medium" after "mouth" and wrote "mustached." He crossed out "medium" after "chin" and wrote "receding."

"What are you writing 'receding' there for?" snapped Mr. Peters. "My chin does not recede."

"Take this back across the hall to Room 12 and paste your pictures on it," said the man. "Next, please!"

So back across the hall to Room 12 went Mr. Peters, and got his fingers all library paste. "I suppose next they'll give you colored crayons and tell you to color your photograph," he growled.

Back in Room 14 again, there was a long line of customers who had come up out of the ground during the slight rain which had been going on outside. It was twenty minutes before Mr. Peters could reach his man.

"Now take this back to Room 12 across the hall and pin ten dollars on it."

"How about pinning a little star of Bethlehem at the top, too?" asked Mr. Peters. "The top looks kind of bare."

"Ten dollars will be enough," said the man.

So Mr. Peters went back across the hall and pinned his ten dollars to the bottom of the blank. Then he counted a hundred by fives and returned to Room 14. Another line was ahead of him.

"You had better let me take it up to him this time," said Mrs. Peters nervously.

"You go back to Room 12 across the hall and be cutting out some paper dolls for the next time (Continued on page 157)"



**A**S you read this story, its author is lost to civilization in the higher reaches of the Colorado Rockies. You may not realize it, but there remain many still unexplored places in those mountains; and it is a real expedition of exploration that now engages Mr. Cooper. Some of the results of his adventures will later appear in further High Country stories.

# When Death Stalked

By Courtney  
Ryley  
Cooper



The woman moved closer, her features lighted up by the head-lamps. "Yes, I had a letter last night."

Illustrated by Raeburn Van Buren

**W**ILLARD SNAITH'S eyes were blue—of the shade which is sometimes thought to proclaim a man mild and meek and unobtrusive. His hair was sandy, his complexion pale—everything about him made for self-effacement; and it was a goodly part of Willard Snaith's cunning that he recognized the fact. In point of truth, Willard Snaith was a cool, calm, deliberate man.

Furthermore, if a man thinks about a thing long enough, it becomes quite a part of his nature. Willard Snaith had thought about one thing for a good share of his life—in general for a decade, in particular during his every waking moment of these last two years. One of his most sacred dreams was of the day when he would be rich—although, of course, he never mentioned the fact. It might be ruinous to the plans of a field inspector of an irrigation company to talk of acquiring wealth. So he had merely played his part, waited, said nothing and perfected his plans. Now that the moment of their execution had arrived, Willard Snaith felt that he had neglected nothing. Everything had come about in a perfectly natural way; there were no enemies, no "black spots" such as he had read about in detective stories. Even the signs were propitious; he was always able, it seemed, on adding up a column of figures, to find plenty of combinations which made eleven, his lucky number. Twice, too, while thinking of this, he had looked over his right shoulder and seen the new moon. All such things count with a careful man.

It was early night, soft night, for the chill of the mountain September had not yet penetrated to this plains country below, where the sun still beamed hot in the daytime and left behind it a lingering warmth to combat the frost which came nightly in the High Country that stretched raggedly against the sky forty miles away. Night with something of June in it—Colorado is a place of contrasts, where winter lingers even into late July, in the lofty ranges, while at their feet, summer often waits until far beyond her time before the autumnal retreat. High Country and Low Country—such are the distinctions in a land where even the most depressed section is nearly a mile above sea level. And this was September in the town of Lanning, forty miles from the range—hot, sandy, flat little Lanning, at the edge of the sugar-beet belt.

Through open doors the brightness of lighted hallways beamed upon verandas where families sat, loath to give up this custom of the summer. The leaves of the cottonwoods rustled pleasantly; children scampered and called out from the streets in a last game before being summoned to bed. From afar came the music of the town band, playing its usual Thursday evening concert in City Hall Square; overhead, a mail-plane, like a gigantic locust, droned drowsily upward in its spirals from the landing-field, then straightened for the long journey to Rock Springs. On this soft, peaceful night, Willard Snaith turned slowly upon his high stool,

and for a while, shielding his eyes from the light, looked out the open window—a mild-appearing little man gazing into the velvet mildness of a gentle evening.

"I can't see a thing to interfere," he murmured, and sat for a while longer in thought. Then he slipped off the stool, and carefully put away his monthly field-report, upon which he had been working. Snaith often did his clerical work at night, for most of his days were spent in traveling the dusty roads of eastern Colorado in the interests of the irrigation company by which he was employed.

Returning to his desk, he carefully arranged every detail for his departure, as had been his habit for fifteen years. Everything must be exactly as everything always had been—nothing to denote mental stress, no word, no action to give the slightest hint that this night was to be any different from hundreds of other nights in the life of Willard Snaith. Every pencil in place, every inkstain wiped away, every blotter in its rack—just so. And, then, as usual, the short good-by chat with old Gregory at the garage.

"Aint runnin' so good," said the ancient night watchman as Snaith paused beside the machine which had carried him for four years over the sage stretches of eastern Colorado. "Think you'll make it all right?"

Snaith pondered.

"I'll tinker with it tomorrow, if I have the time," he said. "Anyway, I can get it fixed at Bradnow, providing it doesn't give out on me entirely. Ought to be there sometime Saturday morning."

"Oh, I guess it'll hold together till then," Gregory said. "If they'd give you a new radiator, you could make these long trips in the daytime, 'stead of staying up all night. Better take that lower road to the reservoir. That thing aint going to climb many grades the way it is. 'Twouldn't be much fun to have it break down out there in the desert—and no way to get help. Acts to me like there's something wrong with the timer."

Snaith turned mild, troubled eyes upon the old watchman.

"Guess I'd better look it over pretty well in the morning," he said climbing into the front seat. "You put my gauge in the car, didn't you?"

"Yeh, under the back seat."

"And my slicker?"

"Under the front one."

Willard Snaith nodded and started down the street in the coughing old "can," as he called the car. In the darkness, his eyes lost for a moment their usual mildness and reflected a glint of satisfaction. Those two details had been handled very well. If things should go wrong, which they would *not*—

However, a man must always be careful—never let up being careful. If there should be suspicion, he could count on Gregory, who could testify that there were no weapons in the car, since he had necessarily looked under the seats; and he could further aver that no car in the condition of this one could make the grades of Rainbow Pass—that is, if things went wrong, which was impossible. The car coughed on, down the shadowy street, turned a corner, and stopped. Willard Snaith pressed at the horn. A door opened, revealing for a moment a shaft of yellow light and the trim silhouette of a woman. Snaith opened the door to the seat beside him.

"Guess this old bus'll be able to carry two as far as the landing-field," he said jokingly. "Didn't know it was so bad when I offered to run you out there. Might's well ride in a wheelbarrow."

THE lights of the car outlined a young woman, bright, vivacious, yet with something in her hesitant manner which had been a constant factor in Willard Snaith's calculations—the manner of a woman who had never tested her own strength, simply because she never had stood alone. She was pretty, with the prettiness that men so often like—eyes ever upturned to a superior and protective being. She was young, moreover, with a childishness which had in it something of helplessness. There had once been a father and brother, and when they had gone, her husband—and Willard Snaith—remained to stand between her and life's harshness. A careful man was Willard Snaith, and he had observed all these qualities in the woman. As customary in her presence, he laughed at her fears now expressed.

"Oh, it'll make the trip all right," he said. "I'm going to take the lower road after I drop you at the Field. Longer, but there aren't any grades, you know. Besides, driving at night like I do, I'm out of the heat on the sage-flats. Keep the old bus cool, and it does pretty well. Heard from Jim lately?" he asked as the woman moved closer, her features lighted up by the head-lamps.

"Yes, I had a letter last night. I'm going to give him a piece of my mind when I answer it," she laughed as she took her seat beside him, and the engine began anew its protesting labors. "After all the trouble we went to, to fix up that red lens for the big light so it would carry better—he didn't even mention it!"

Willard Snaith's grip tightened on the wheel—it always did at such remarks. To him they were guideposts on the road of his future, reminders never to neglect the little things when dealing with a woman—things to be cautious about when, as the one friend in all her world, he could begin the campaign of sympathy and helpfulness and constancy that would accomplish the effacement of a bitter memory and induce gratitude and love and what counted most of all—wealth.

"Well, you know how it is, Mary. Busy like Jim is—trying to get everything finished before the snows drive him out. That vein still showing good, is it?"

"Oh, wonderfully! Jim says it's a good two feet across now, and every indication that it will keep on widening. Why, he's got a whole fruit-jar full of free gold, he says, that will go a half-ounce to the smallest nugget. Besides all the other stuff. He'll bring down at least ten thousand dollars, he says. Then, of course, when he really starts to work it in the spring, with men and everything, and an aerial tram to run the ore down to the road, why, there's no telling what it'll be! Oh, Jim Preston and I'll be riding in limousines yet!"

"Take me out once in a while, so I can see what one of 'em feels like?" Snaith asked jokingly.

MARY PRESTON placed a hand on his arm. "Why, Willard!

As if we wouldn't! Goodness," she sighed, and child-woman that she was, sank limply back in the seat. "I don't know what we'd have done, we two, without you all this time. Jim up there in the hills from the first touch of spring until the blizzards drive him out in the winter. And poor little me down here, worrying my head off about him, simply living from letter to letter."

"But you've been able to signal to him."

"Yes, but he hasn't been able to answer. And he's really the one, Willard. Because it wouldn't make much difference if something should happen to me. I'm here in town, with friends and comforts, and besides, if necessary, really, somebody could always go after him, or flash him the distress signal with the searchlight. But if anything should happen to him—"

"There you go!" he said. "Worrying about things that aren't going to happen. They never *have* happened, have they?"

"No." She sat silent for a moment as the wheezing automobile turned into the road leading to the aviation field, where, during this time of the early night, though against rules, Mary Preston was permitted for a short while to signal her well-being to a watching man up in the hills, forty odd miles away. "No, everything's been all right, so far, Willard. But"—and she laughed uneasily—"it wouldn't have been, if it hadn't been for you. I don't know what on earth would have happened without you," she repeated, "holding me up the way you have. I just wonder that Jim doesn't get jealous sometimes, the way I rave on about you when I write to him."

"Oh, he knows," said Snaith as he turned the car for the lights of the landing-field. "He'd never think anything of it."

"Of course not," she agreed. "I just said that for a joke. But you've been wonderful, Willard. Don't think for a minute that I'm complaining. I'm a clinging vine, I know—my father and brother wanted me to be that way, and now Jim does, too. But I'm not selfish, Willard. If I worry, it's because I love Jim so, and hate to think of him working all alone up there where I can't help him. I haven't minded the rest of it at all. Before he began to take out pay ore, and I had to work, I just loved it—because for once in my life I was helping somebody. Besides,"—she laughed in self-deprecation,—"it hasn't been such a terrible sacrifice. You know that claim always did look sure—it wasn't as though we were gambling with everything we had. I could have worked twice as hard and never minded it at all. But you know how I've always been, Willard—I've just had to have somebody to share things with me, even my worrying."

"Sure. But you're just made that way, Mary."

"I know it—even though it does make me mad at myself. I'll be worrying about you now, until you get back," she said as the machine stopped at the edge of the landing-field.

"Don't you do that," Snaith said, then, with a sudden thought, adding: "I'll give you a ring on the company phone, mebbe, when I get into Bradnow, Saturday morning. I'll have to call up the office from there, anyway, and I'll get the girl to connect us."





White arms reached at him now. And that Thing was still calling: "The lights o' Lanning. Watching you!"


Which, as Willard Snaith considered it as he left Mary Preston at the landing-field and headed the machine toward the sage country, was a two-edged inspiration. It would aid in his plans if things went right, and afford him a warning if by any chance they should go awry.

After a time he stopped the machine and looked back. Slanted above the landing-field, an intermittent shaft of red light pointed toward the brooding hills of the distance, flash and blackness, flash and blackness, as Mary Preston signaled her well-being to a watching man high up there in the ragged Rockies. Snaith's weak eyes took careful note of the flashes. The matter of the light would be something to talk about later—for had it not been he who had suggested a red over-lens of plain glass, because red carries farther? He threw in the clutch and plodded doggedly on, reaching at last the little store at the Reservoir Crossroads, the last habitation in a hundred miles of sagebrush and 'dobe and sand and tumbleweed and prairie-dog holes.

"Aint got any parts that'd fit my car, have you?" he asked, as he entered the store. As the storekeeper shook his head: "Lend me some baling-wire, then," he said. "Kind of an arm that holds up something there by the timer. It's broken. The old bus'll hardly move."

Together they went outside, to effect an adjustment of the broken part, while the storekeeper held the lantern. The engine seemed to run slightly better presently, and the storekeeper hoped he'd make it all right, while Snaith remarked that he wished he'd waited and had the thing fixed before he left town. Another perfect link in a perfect chain! The weak-eyed man drove away.

Ten miles farther on he stopped, surveyed the whole flat world about him for a sign of approaching cars, then, assured of safety, left his seat. From an inner pocket he brought a small piece of metal, purchased six months before, and in the faint glow of a trouble-light, he worked swiftly with wrench and pliers. When again he pressed the accelerator, there was no gasping, no chok-



ing, no hesitancy of explosion. Five minutes later that revived automobile cut through the night at express-train rapidity, taking the curves of the sandy plains road in a manner which spoke of the driver's familiarity, breasting the slight rises with never a faltering of power, making the most of every bit of downgrade—a machine skimming through the night at top speed.

An hour later Snaith reached a landmark, and consulting immediately the dusty-faced clock on the dash, nodded with satisfaction. Just as he'd figured. An hour more to reach the reservoir, another hour to look after things there and take the reading—two hours to reach the hills, and another to ascend the pass to the spot where he could hide the car! It had all been gone over time after time in theory; it was good now to know that the theory was proving correct.

The miles skimmed by. Willard Snaith reached the great gray embankment which, stretching faintly through the night, denoted the reservoir—storehouse of moisture for miles of otherwise arid territory. He ascended swiftly to the spillway and read the depth of the water upon the indicator, meticulously marking it down upon his record-book then and there by the aid of his flashlight. Then he compared the figures anew, to be certain of their correctness, and moved for the little shelter-shack near by.

Within, he lighted the lamp, then carefully moved a board in the floor and brought forth something wrapped in gunnysacking. It was a rifle. It had been cached there for two years, and purchased surreptitiously even then. Willard Snaith was a careful man.

And likewise because he was careful, he unwrapped it over a newspaper, to catch any possible shreds of the fabric. He had read of such things—clues built up from threads. He held the bore to the light. The riflings gleamed; the greasy packing had held true to its task. He rewrapped the weapon then, and thrust the newspaper into the little sheet-iron stove. Then from the deep pocket of his field coat he drew out an alarm-clock.

From deeper in that same pocket he produced a small perforated piece of wood, like a cribbage board, and set shortened friction matches in the many holes, heads up. By a string he tied a piece of sandpaper to the exposed hammer of the old-fashioned alarm. From the other end of the sandpaper he ran a rubber band to a near-by nail. Against the rough side of the sandpaper he placed the board of matches.

He set the alarm, and waited, weak blue eyes watching the minute-hand as it moved. A click, then the whirring of the alarm. The sandpaper moved back and forth across the match-heads. Smiling his satisfaction, Willard Snaith snuffed out the resultant flame, and one by one threw the matches into the stove, burning them with the newsprint and the blackened sandpaper. But the alarm-clock and the piece of wood like a cribbage board he replaced carefully in the deep pocket of his field coat. He had plenty of matches and string and rubber bands. If he was not mistaken, there should be eleven of the last named left. He counted them. Right! Eleven. It always had been his lucky

number. He could depend on that, then—an alarm-clock ticking away long after he had hurried off, and continuing for eleven hours, while matches and sandpaper and the inevitable kerosene which forms a necessity of every mountain cabin waited—then, while he talked of irrigation, water-supply and snow-meltage a hundred miles distant, the alarm would whirr, matches blaze, oil burst into flame—and the evidence of a crime disappear. Snaith looked carefully about the cabin before he extinguished the lamp. Again the motor whirled on the back-trail, and the car skidded slightly in the sandy curves. An hour later better speed was made; he was then on the cross-mountain road, headed toward Rainbow Pass.

There was no more to fear upon this passageway than upon the sandy stretches which he had just traveled. The road was closed just beyond the other side of the pass—a rock-slide, filling a cut rods deep with slabs and stones and boulders, had closed communication between eastern and western Colorado two months earlier than the usual time when drifting snow made it impassable. Now cross-mountain traffic went by the southern route. Besides, it was night, and night meant safety. One car looks like any other in the darkness.

In fact, there was nothing to fear from any angle. True, he was consuming a good deal of time; yet it was the sensible thing to do. He would go in the night, and come in the night. There would be no one to see him approaching or departing. Besides, the time fitted to his legitimate labors. He was to be away upon his duties from Thursday night until Saturday morning, with something to keep him busy every waking moment. The irrigation company naturally did not know that the gauging of tributary streams which should occupy him on Friday had already been done ten days before, and that every figure was ready for entry in his report-book. During that time he would be lost to civilization by command of his superiors. The figures would speak for themselves.

For this plan of Willard Snaith carried in it nothing of anger, or revenge, or heated passion. It was coldly conceived, as coldly planned. And now as the machine began to labor slightly with the first of the grades, Snaith went over his plans again, bit by bit, action by action, checking everything that had gone before, and pronouncing them perfect.

He would arrive in the heavy timber by daylight, the plan concluded. Snaith had been up there twice before, with Jim and Mary; he knew the place where concealment was certain. There he would spend the day—mostly in sleep, because a man needs cool nerves and a refreshed body when there's hard work to do. Jim would never find him there; the mine lay in the opposite direction. When evening came, and Jim returned to his cabin, Snaith would get him, with a bullet through the heart—not through the head, but through the heart. Fire would not necessarily erase the former; the marks in the skull might remain in spite of it. A bullet through the heart, and after that, no hurrying, no frenzied efforts. Slow, careful procedure, so that when the alarm-clock did its part, hours later, firing of Jim's cabin would be assured, its destruction complete. Willard Snaith calculated that he could wait until three o'clock the next morning before setting it and starting downward—that would give him a full three hours before daylight to reach the reservoir, replace the broken part on his timer and begin his lame journey back to Bradnow. He'd reach there by nine o'clock. The fire in the cabin would not start until two o'clock in the afternoon, and long before it could be reached, the cabin would be gone, and

with it all evidence save that of an accidental conflagration, leaving only the heavy deadfalls and wind-blown timber which surrounded it to send the warning below, by smoke or flame. All that would be as Willard Snaith desired and planned. A man cannot be a hundred miles away from a spot, yet set a fire at that spot at the same time. If his machine was fixed in time, he could even go up there and help—be one of the rescuers. Mary would send him word. He would be the first in her mind. Then afterward Willard Snaith figured on the value of sympathy, and the efficacy of a pillar of strength in time of trouble. After that, it might be a year or two. Maybe three. But he'd get her. And be a good husband—always.

The engine labored anew and he pressed harder on the accelerator. Grade was a matter of constant recurrence now; foothills, one after another, were slipping behind him in his steady ascent; gradually the vegetation at the sides of the road changed; the greasewood and sage of the flat country was giving way to scrubby pines and spruce, and quaking asp; presently the road would become an upslanting lane between deep successions of the shivering aspens. Snaith found himself looking more often at them than was necessary, while something struggled deep in his brain for recognition. Something about those aspen trees—some crazy story that he'd read somewhere. A fable or a joke or fairy-tale he'd heard when he was a kid. Then he remembered, and kept his mild blue eyes straight on the road. About One having been crucified on a cross of aspen, and the trees trembling ever afterward. Silly! Things like that didn't happen. When a thing was done, it was done. Willard Snaith glanced toward his speedometer in subconscious rebellion against conscious thought. It showed 29,656 miles—three elevens. He felt better.

Upward, ever upward; the car was whining in second now, while the man at the wheel bent more intently upon his task. No longer was the progression straight; the road curved and wound and twisted, taking its tortuous way along the edge of cliffs, where blackness yawned only a foot or so beyond the outer wheels, or veering as suddenly into the somberness of heavy timber—upward, while Willard Snaith freed a hand for a moment, that he might pull the collar of his field coat closer about his neck. The ordinary coolness of the lower country had given way to a penetrating, tomblike chill, as if black rocks were vaulted

about one, seeping moisture.

Yet there were only the pines, and the shuddering aspens, now yellow and brown or blood-red with the artistry of autumn—the pines and the aspens and the stars, gleaming through the branches of the more distant pines like the lights of a far-away Christmas tree. Then, suddenly, the stars disappeared.

Snaith rubbed his eyes and reached for the windshield-wiper. It was only the mountain moisture, born of the difference in temperatures between the land which lay below and the chilliness of the higher levels, hanging close to the ground, or floating through the dark avenues of the trees like ghost things fleeing to seclusion before the invasion of light. Ghost things—with trailing arms, and wraithlike vestments, slinking into the forests, disappearing, hiding.

"Clouds!" said Snaith aloud, and reached again for the windshield-wiper; the glass had dimmed again as if something invisible had breathed upon it. Snaith glanced at the dash clock. Two hours until daylight.

Presently the trees became less frequent, giving way to clumps of mountain  
(Continued on page 132)



That afternoon, below the cliff, the sheriff found something more.



# Mated

By

Wallace Irwin

Illustrated by Henry Raleigh

**W**ALLACE IRWIN realizes that he must now look to his laurels as never before. And all because of Mrs. Irwin. Presumably just to see if her husband had been spoofing her about the hard work an author does, she decided to try it herself, and selected the most difficult literary form of all, the play. When the manuscript was ready, she sent it to a manager; it was accepted at once—and its presentation is scheduled for this autumn. "And," observes Mrs. Irwin, "I learned that writing is hard work."

## *The Story So Far:*

**W**HEN Lucinda was twelve, the first blow fell. She lived on Cynthea Court in a Southern city, with her well-loved father Ike Shelby, and her beautiful mother Matala; and though Matala made scenes because of Ike's passion for amateur theatricals, and spent a good deal of time in the society of a Mr. Nash—life, in the main, had seemed good to the child.

Lucinda had been tempted by a friend to go to a forbidden movie that dreadful day. Ike Shelby had found her there, but had not reproached her. She must, however, come home, he said: there were people there she must meet.

These people turned out to be a fat and overdressed Mr. and Mrs. Weaver, whom Lucinda disliked on sight. And she was informed that Mr. Weaver, not Ike Shelby, was her real father—and that she was to spend the ensuing six months with the Weavers in New Jersey.

Later Lucinda learned that while she was still a baby, Matala had divorced Weaver. According to the decree, the child was to spend half the year with each parent. Shortly afterward Matala had married Ike Shelby. Mr. Weaver had never before claimed Lucinda, but a year previously he had remarried, and the new Mrs. Weaver had laid claim to certain silver retained by Matala. An acrimonious correspondence had followed—and in revenge for their inability to replenish the coveted plate, the Weavers were claiming their six months of Lucinda. She was being betrayed for pieces of silver.

To Lucinda the sojourn with the Weavers was a nightmare visit to *Vulgaria*. Her stepbrother Eddie proved a genius in the gentle arts of persecution; and the parents compelled Lucinda to pour at their garish parties—from the cocktail-shaker, as a sort of *jeune fille* bartender. Finally when they routed her out of bed one night to assist at a particularly inebriate function, she slipped out the back door and finally made her way, after sundry adventures, back to Ike Shelby and Cynthea Court. She arrived, however, at an inauspicious hour: Ike and Matala were about to separate. (*The story continues in detail:*)

**T**HE chronicle of Lucinda Shelby, during her adolescent years, must of necessity be a nomad's record of vague travel, queer friendships, scrappy education and broken dreams. If environment molds character, Lucinda's should have been of inharmonious stuffs, joined crazily without design. But environment does not usually mold character; it only changes the color of its manifestations.

Directly after the divorce—the Shelbys measured time from the divorce, much as the Chinese measure from the birth of the Republic—Mrs. Shelby packed and hurried to Philadelphia. Everybody, even the confused Lucinda, knew why she went East so suddenly. The affluent and socially desirable Ezra Nash had arranged to cast away his wife at the hour of convenience; soon there would be another wedding, and Matala would have a step-up in the world she desired so wistfully.

She chose the Greenbriar-Pelham for her strategic headquarters, and there Lucinda became a very wise, very mature and somewhat bored young person. A hotel child, you might have called her, had she been a little younger. She lived in a crowd, seeing a world in which she had no part passing in review: hasty New Yorkers rushing in and out with their luggage, lanky horse-traders from Kentucky following the hunt club shows along the Main Line, pot-bellied Middle Western manufacturers clogging the corridors in expectation of another business men's banquet, and at Thanksgiving-time the spectacle of West Point cadets and Annapolis middies standing thick and straight as wheat around the dining-room door, the adoration of pretty girls who had flocked there for the annual game.

In all these scenes she took an impersonal interest as she stood apart, marking time on life. At first the Shelbys had taken a comfortable suite with a handsome little parlor, and sunlight on two sides. They wouldn't have to live in a hotel for more than a few weeks, promised Mrs. Shelby, mellowed and kindly with her bright expectations. She only vented her spite on poor Ike, as if his poverty had been the principal cause of divorce—which was true. She looked hungrily toward Alimony Day, paid her hotel-bills, stood off her dressmakers and made the most of a precarious situation.

Ezra Nash's attentions were clocklike in their regularity. But as the months wore on through one year and into another, Lucinda began to see everything with the false keenness of the adolescent. Her mother had burned her bridges behind her and come to Philadelphia with the fixed purpose of marrying this eminent sporting Quaker. But success, somehow, had been deferred. Now and again Lucinda caught murmurs of explanation from the gentleman's pleasant lips. There was a Marie involved—that must have been his wife. Marie was unreasonable. She wouldn't give him "grounds," whatever that was. She was "living apart" in a place called Germantown.

Through all this Matala maintained an air of adorable patience, only revealing herself in occasional spits of temper when alone with her daughter. But Mr. Nash was still lavish; his flowers came with a mechanical regularity which suggested a standing



Lucinda yielded at last and said: "Mother, I'll try to help. Don't worry about me."

order at the florist's. They were invariably one dozen American beauties, as much alike as though they had been cast in the same mold. They expressed Mr. Nash, Lucinda concluded with sharp young observation. They came on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, always in a similar box. He was habitual to the point of mania. His costume seldom varied from the dull-brown suit and the knit lavender tie. Once she saw him in knickerbockers, and he looked almost indecent because he was wearing gray. When she lunched with him, and she was sometimes included in small parties, she knew in advance just what he would order: *purée* of tomato soup, beefsteak with French-fried potatoes, Camembert cheese and a small cup of black coffee. No more, no less.

She suspected that his attentions to her mother were habitual too. He had started and knew not how to stop; and if he ever

stopped, it would be like a clock which, beginning to run down, still ticks, but feebly and yet more feebly.

In their second Philadelphia June, Matalea came to the point, not with Ezra Nash, but with Lucinda. It was during the dressing hour, which Mrs. Shelby usually protracted to two. Since a personal maid was prohibitive in that period of her financial history, she used Lucinda and did very well. Trunks were opened; trunks were closed. Gowns were brought forth, laid out, put back. The hotel apartment had the same silk-strewn, shoe-littered confusion which Mrs. Shelby's room in Cynthea Court had always presented.

Her mother, half clad, sat before the mirror, clipping frail shell-rims from her nails, a delicate operation effected with a pair of tiny curved scissors. Lucinda for the second time had brought out the gray dancing frock with silver embroidery and stood with



it over her arm when she caught Matalea's sherry-colored eyes regarding her fixedly in the mirror.

"Daughter," she began, and Lucinda knew by her tone that something significant was coming, "it's right expensive living here with two rooms."

"Couldn't we get along with one?" suggested Lucinda. "We're only here to sleep and dress."

"We'll have a right hard time paying for *one*," said Mother as she pressed a slim forefinger under her eye to rub away a crease. "It's the expense of keeping both of us, honey. Now, if your stepfather"—she had chosen to call Daddy that since their separation—"had provided a decent alimony—but beggars can't be choosers. Hand me that jar of cold cream, will you—it's on the stand by the bed, I think."

The jar of cold cream was not on the stand by the bed. It was finally discovered in the bathroom cabinet. During her search Lucinda was filled with strange conjectures. What was their next move to be?

"There are a lot of good hotels, much cheaper," she ventured, placing the jar beside her mother's elbow. Matalea sat a long time in silence, rubbing gently, concentratedly. Then she spoke:

"Darling, I hope you'll do something to help Mother. We're in a rather bad fix just now. Of course it's only temporary. Pretty soon I'll be able to give you school and clothes and the things you ought to have. But in the meantime we can't go moving around into musty old hotels. It won't look right. We've got to keep up—"

"What do you want me to do, Mother?" asked Lucinda, her nervousness growing during the long preamble.

"I've written to Fairchild Weaver," said Mrs. Shelby, and the eyes in the mirror no longer looked at Lucinda.

"Written to him?" Lucinda sat down hastily, for her knees were growing weak.

"It's his duty to take care of you half the year." Matalea's voice hardened. "I've asked him to take you for a little while. You ought to be reasonable, Lucinda. You ought to be grateful for such a lovely home. I'd give my eyes if I had—"

"Mother, it's impossible," Lucinda broke in passionately.

"Why?" the mirrored eyes were still averted.

"I can't stand that boy Eddie. He tortures me. If you only knew the things he does! I hate that house. It seems to choke me." Her words were coming rapidly, hysterically. "I'd rather go to a—" Pausing a moment for a simile, she broke out again: "I'd rather go to an insane asylum. They're drinking every night, acting like fools—and not letting me alone. And Eddie, Eddie! He's a regular—he's a regular Indian."

"Hush!" cautioned Mrs. Shelby. "People can hear you all up and down the hall." Then at last she turned, and to her surprise Lucinda saw streams of tears running greasily over the





"Your daughter?"  
puffed Colonel Harbison. "Don't tell me  
that, little woman.  
She's your sister."

carefully applied cold cream. "Come here, darling," Matalea appealed brokenly, and when Lucinda had buried her perplexed head in her mother's lap: "You wont worry me any more than you have to, will you, dearest? You don't know how proud I am of you, and how I want to see you have the things you ought to have."

"But—"

"Honey, I'm in a bad fix—you wont tell anybody, will you? But everything depends on my staying here, and keeping up appearances. We can't both stay. You've grown a lot older in the last year, and I know now you'll be tactful and reasonable with the Weavers. Because you've got to, honey, or—"

The rest was smothered in an avalanche of sobs. Lucinda hated to hear her mother cry. There was something dreadful in the sound. And because she had grown to pity the wrong-headed little woman, and with pity had come the protectiveness

which is sister to affection, she yielded at last and said: "Mother, I'll try to help. Don't worry about me. I'll try."

Matalea dined out that night, and Lucinda went to the movies with a Miss Owsley, a chic and worldly person of twenty-two whom she had met sometime since in the lobby. She had handsome hazel eyes and a rather narrow face which sometimes had a drawn look, because Miss Owsley tortured herself with exercises and potions, in the fear of becoming unmodishly plump. Lucinda admired her for her faultlessness, and enjoyed her sprightly knowledge of Philadelphia scandals. She lived mysteriously somewhere upstairs in the Greenbriar-Pelham. Lucinda never told her mother about Miss Owsley, because instinctively she felt that Mrs. Shelby would

dislike her, would insist on knowing "who she was," and Lucinda couldn't tell her.

Together they saw "The Birth of a Nation," freezing the marrow with Yankee plots and the deeds of white-hooded brethren. Secretly Lucinda wished they had chosen a more cheerful picture, for depression sat astride her like the Old Man of the Sea. She must go back to Montclair. Her absence would save her mother from possible disaster. She had become a burden to her mother. She must go back to Montclair—and Eddie.

She was about to slip the picture under its pile when Miss Owsley spoke: "Isn't he nice-looking?" "The actor, you mean?" asked Lucinda.

The refrain, Montclair and Eddie, chimed like a dirge when she went to bed that night. Her mother was not yet in. Stretching herself between the sheets, Lucinda gave herself over to those worried speculations which feed upon the restless sleeper. She made plans of her own. She would go to live in a boarding-house—she had read of a hearty, picturesque boarding-house in Mr. Harrison's "Queen." From there she would hunt work; she'd be a cash-girl in a department store, always keeping herself very tidy and neat. And in the boarding-house there would be a misunderstood young genius—with one funny bald mark on his eyebrow. They would sit together evenings, studying under the lamp.

Thoughts spun like cobwebs through her half-waking mind. How many people she had seen in the hotel that year, learned to know by name, almost forgotten! The hollow-eyed old gentleman in the wheel-chair who smiled at her when she passed, and wanted to talk, and seemed so ill. Miss Owsley said he had died last week. . . . The very fashionable Wallace girls, who had been so nice for a while, asked her to the theater, then dropped her. Jerry, the elevator boy, who saw the dark side of everything and never failed to do her a favor. The bandy-legged Scotchman who had come to collect one of Mother's bills, had waited a long time, made Lucinda's acquaintance and told about his little lass who played the violin. Faces swam before her, friendly and unfriendly. A jumble. Some of them were of girls her own age, some of them wrinkled and comic. There had been so many. . . .

"Darling, are you awake?" It was her mother's voice which aroused her from half-slumber. Looking very young and beautiful in her coral evening gown, she stood under the electric light, smiling radiantly. Her cheeks were bright, her eyes brilliant as a young girl's. Something pleasant had happened. Maybe Mr. Nash had arranged things so he could marry her. Then in her hand Lucinda noticed a yellow sheet of paper, a telegram.

"I just got this," announced Mrs. Shelby, and handed the message to her daughter.

Upper Montclair. June 12.

Your message received. Motoring to Atlantic City tomorrow. Will stop for tea and discuss proposition.

Fairchild Weaver.

The Weavers arrived at a little after five. The Shelbys had been awaiting them downstairs since four. Matalea had put on a smart champagne-colored frock and a pair of imitation emerald earrings—the real ones had disappeared. Lucinda's frock had been pressed for the occasion, and she was conscious of the fact that her shoes had been half-soled and showed it. They sat silent, mother and daughter, anxious and afraid—Lucinda afraid that she was going to Montclair, Matalea that she wasn't. Only the management was aware of their peculiar status in the hotel; the all-seeing Argus at the desk had counted the bills and duns from impatient shopkeepers.

But Mrs. Shelby had a place in society. Just what it was, nobody could clearly define. It was certain that people gossiped of her relations with Ezra Nash and were beginning to count her cause a lost one. But she was related to the Philadelphia branch of the Skeltons; they had her out to dinner and at club parties and horse-shows on the Main Line. Ezra Nash, too, had introduced her well. His intentions were serious, certainly, or he would not have done that. But she was hard up, putting up a tremendous bluff. Argus knew that. Then there was old Colonel Harbison. Why didn't she make the most of it and let him pay her bills?

On the little girl, Argus might have wasted a sigh, had he time



for sighing over little girls around hotels. She was always reading in odd corners, or knocking about by herself or picking up acquaintances. She had such lovely eyes and natural ringlets, people were sure to look at her. That would get her into trouble some day—but since the Shelbys paid their house charges promptly every week and behaved themselves respectably, it was not the duty of Argus to interfere.

Matalea was unusually gentle with Lucinda as they sat there, waiting for the Weavers. "Darling, if you go," she said, "wont you write to your mother every day? You only wrote me once the other time."

Lucinda looked up, and in the vain little face caught an unexpected longing for affection.

"I'll write," she promised, and had a feeling that the jailer would soon be there with his black cap.

Just then they arrived, Mrs. Weaver in a shiny yellow motoring coat that seemed to proclaim its expense through the length of the hotel. Fairchild Weaver was delayed—the swinging glass doors at the entrance were revolving round and round, despite the frantic efforts of a doorman and the explosive threats of a red-faced traveler whose brief-case had been knocked from his hand. Fairchild Weaver was the picture of well-clad dignity until he sought to stop the whirling menace; he fastened a foot



and an elbow against a flying panel, and had his hat popped off for his pains.

Looking worn and tired, at last he advanced with Eddie, who showed an egg-shaped lump on his forehead and shrieked until all business in the lobby came to a halt while the public peered.

"Bum hotel! The guy hit me with his cane. Yes, he did. Momma. Hit me with his cane. Say, this is a hick town, all right, all right. When do we eat?"

"Eddie, remember where you are!" cautioned Mrs. Weaver, mildly regarding her experiment in self-determination.

"Shut up!" commanded Eddie. Then with a baneful eye on Lucinda: "Gosh! Where did *you* get in from?"

"This is Mrs. Shelby, Lucinda's mother," ventured Mrs. Weaver soothingly.

"She sure looks like it," said Eddie, evading her proffered hand. It was a bad start all round. Grumpily, brusquely, his nerves

on edge after a stirring day's tour with Eddie, Fairchild Weaver explained that they would have only a few minutes. They were late and would have to push on to Atlantic City.

"You'll have tea, wont you?" asked Matala wistfully.

"I wouldn't use it to drown a cat in," spoke up Eddie.

"What do you want, dearie?" coaxed his mother.

"Ice-cream soda, I told you a hundred times."

"Come, darling," she smiled, showing dimples through her deep enamel. "You shall have just what you want."

They filed in to the tea-table which Matala had so anxiously reserved. When they had taken their places and Eddie was quieted with a dish of bananas and a plate of ice-cream with chocolate sauce, Matala cleared her throat, and Lucinda pitied her for the nervous, uncertain tone with which she began:

"You got my letter, I suppose. Your telegram—"

"Oh, yes," replied Weaver calmly, (Continued on page 100)



READERS may accept this short story as a link connecting its author's last and next serial novels. All of Mr. Hughes' novels, it will be remembered, are first and exclusively published in this magazine. Thus, in the September number will begin such a tale as Mr. Hughes has never before written. It is a story of tenderness and great beauty, yet lacking not at all in powerful drama. Its scene is a small Midwestern city, and its characters are people we all know—and like.



# By Their Fruits Ye Shall Know

By

Rupert Hughes

Illustrated by Everett Shinn

"SELF-SACRIFICE," said Tom Prothero, "is so precious a trait that we always try to encourage it—in others. When we find a soul that is unselfish, we not only accept all it gives, but reach out and take even what it might have been willing to withhold. We are very helpful in that way. But when we have got all the poor thing has to give us, we're pretty likely to chuck it overboard."

"So whenever I run across some poor fool who is being ostracized, outraged and generally despised, I say to myself: 'Ah-ha, old dear, what a lot of kindness you must have been doing to get into such disfavor!'"

"The best plan is to establish a good name for selfishness; then any little human touch makes a sensation. But if you start out by doing the generous things, every time you hold back a bit you disappoint people, and they say you are growing stingy and cold."

That was a line of talk that Tom Prothero was always reeling off; and now and then something happens that seems to confirm his bitter wisdom. The Lamoree case, for instance.

The newspapers and the courts unveil and expose heartbreaking things, but often they uncover only an outer layer, a rind of actions and motives, leaving the core of them undisclosed and unsuspected.

The glossiest cleanest seeds, the pinkest most beautiful blossoms, may precede a fruit which time the worm, and cankerous circumstances, will deliver to the autumn as a repulsive and odious object.

There is eminent authority for saying, "By their fruits ye shall know them;" and yet the fruits tell only a part of the story and are deceptive to the last degree—except of course to a divine understanding that knows the whole history.



Nicolette broke out:  
"I think you're the  
most selfish little beast  
I ever met. Jim loves  
you like a dog, and  
you're a perfect cat."

One of the saddest creatures I ever saw was Mrs. Amy Lamoree, who wept on the witness-stand after as sordid a divorce trial as I had ever witnessed. The only things that redeemed the occasion were the honest wrath of the judge and the exalted look in the face of the poor woman when the judge asked her:

"Did you love your husband?"

She cried: "I did love him! I do! I always will!"

"Then why do you want a divorce?"

"I want to do anything that will make him happy!"

Then she broke and wept bitterly as kindly friends led her tenderly from the room.

Even Lamoree, callous as he had been shown to be, was a gargoyle of confusion when the judge poured across the ledge of his high tribunal these icy words:

"I think, Mr. Lamoree, that you will live to see the day when you will be sorry for your neglect of so noble a woman as this plaintiff. A man can never afford to cast aside the love of a good woman."

One of the most distressing things in the world is to know the

whole story. People who are ill-informed always have comfortable explanations and restful conclusions, and exclusive heavens and hells where definitely good and bad people are imparadised or fried forever for definitely good or bad lives. The scientists and scholars are the ones who don't know what it is all about, or where to put the praise, and where the blame, if either, anywhere.

This is not the whole story of the Lamorees, of course. It would take a library to tell that. But it is a part of the story that never reached the judge or the newspapers.

It tells a bit more of the truth about one who had a heart as ruddy and as juicy as an orange, a heart that gushed with generosity when it was full; that gave again when it was crushed; and then, when it had no more to give, was thrown where old orange-skins are thrown.

When Amy Lamoree—she was Amy Paisley then—met Jim Lamoree, she was so exquisite that even his rough soul thought of orange blossoms. She was so delectably beautiful, so luscious, that he wanted to possess her forever.

He startled her by proposing marriage before she had known him a month. Lamoree was not at all good-looking, and he was older than the lover of Amy's dreams, and not quite so rich as she had hoped; but she was touched by the hunger of his plea and by the lofty opinion he held of her. While she hesitated, Fate compelled her to a decision. Her parents wrote her that she would have to come home to the village or make other arrangements for her support, since they had sent her the last penny they could spare.

Amy hated to go back to Claybank. It was a narrow, bigoted place where people were harshly critical, and where the opportunities for service were limited. For one thing, there were not many people to serve. And those few did not appreciate Amy or her ambitions. So her love of beauty and of knowledge impelled her to cast her lot in the great city. She planned to be a great actress or a great singer or something, but she found that she might have to wait and toil for years before success could be achieved. Her parents could not wait.

Lamoree's proffer of marriage was so opportune and persistent that she could not resist it. He was earning what was modest enough for New York, but to her village innocence was a great fortune. With wealth one could do so much for the poor; one could spread happiness, entertain brilliant people and learn from them things that would enlarge and enrich the soul.

So Amy plighted her troth with Lamoree; gave all her golden charm, her blithe youth, her eagerness for life into the cold keeping of this severe and rather glum stranger. What can a girl know of a man before she is married to him? And then the mistake is almost past mending.

The first thing Lamoree did after getting Amy safely pledged was to quench her girlish fancy of a gorgeous wedding. He put his refusal on the grounds of shyness, and he had the poor taste, the Philistinism, to plead: "When two people love as we do, they should just steal away and be married obscurely, and then live together in as deep a solitude as they can keep."

This was pretty as a speech, but dull as a program; and Amy soon decided that it was the mere disguise of miserliness. She had married a stingy man who was spendthrift only of phrases that cost him nothing.

In yielding the elaborate church ceremony she had given up also the bridal veil, the gleaming sisterhood of the bridesmaids, the pipe organ roaring the tune for the grand march down the aisle, the flower-banked altar, "The Voice That Breathed O'er Eden," and the gold and silver presents, among which even the duplicates would show a fond thought.

The honeymoon was another disenchantment. She found that she soon tired of Lamoree. She could not seem to please him, though she offered to go to the most fascinating places and buy the most attractive things to beautify her. She threw off all the shrinking instincts of the bride and did her best to prolong the honeymoon. She suggested a winter on the Riviera or in Egypt. He stubbornly insisted that he did not marry her as a traveling companion but as a home-maker, and also that he must get back to his business. When they returned to town, he would not live at a hotel as she urged, but preferred to hide her away in an apartment.

When he came from the office tired and numb of evenings, she would try to get him out in the world for his own sake; but he would protest that he was happier just at home with her than in the crowds.

Since he would not be budged from his armchair, she sought to make herself more entertaining to him by going about as freely as she could during the daytime. She tried to broaden herself by cultivating acquaintances among the most vivid people. In the women she met, she took little interest. They were a catty lot, full of idle and vicious gossip, who neither understood one nor tried to.

THERE was one woman in particular who had a most dampening effect on Amy. Her name was Nicolette Maynard. She was absolutely blind to the beauty of Amy's ideals. In fact, one day she dared to break out with a furious tirade:

"Amy, I think you are the most selfish little beast I ever met. Why God should have put such a fine honest soul as Jim Lamoree in the power of such a bloodsucker I can't imagine, except on the ground of the old text about whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth. Jim loves you like a dog; and you're a perfect cat! A cat, *net!*"

Amy repaid this venom with a patient smile, and Nicolette fairly screamed at her:

"Your sweetness is positively poisonous!"

This forced Amy to be a trifle more robust in her rebuke than usual; but she simply murmured:

"It's a pity you and Jim didn't get married. He adores you, and you understand him so perfectly."

"Adores me! The poor dear fool doesn't know I'm alive. He worships your very footprints."

Amy, with fine self-control, shrugged her shoulders and made no retort. But she could not see Nicolette again. In fact, she could not take pleasure in the company of any of the women she knew. They were all so viciously jealous and cynical.

Besides, since her husband was a man, in order to be of value to him Amy preferred to acquire the man's viewpoint. So most of her acquaintances were men, men who were not tied down to offices and jobs, but who were refined, with leisure, had time to live and knew how.

Often when an accident delayed her return, or her husband learned of an encounter she had had with some attractive gentleman, he would fail to appreciate her spirit, or even to thank her for her efforts in his behalf.

He was not honest enough to come out frankly and avow his jealousy. There would have been some manliness to that. But Lamoree would sulk in his shell and look hurt and helpless—the two most maddening looks a man can wear.

IN spite of all that Amy gave of herself to making herself an ideal wife, Lamoree was plainly dissatisfied. To put herself at her best, she would occasionally spend more than her budget. But Lamoree did not smother her with compliments as other men did.

When she felt the need of something that he could not afford, she would occasionally open a secret account of her own, to be paid when she had saved up enough or when she had something to spare from the extra sums Lamoree tossed her now and then when luck had come his way. These she thought of rather as tips than as gracious tributes of love. And heaven knows, she worked hard enough to earn those tips.

Sometimes a secret bill that she had been unable to pay would be sent to her husband by one of those hypocritical tradesmen who are all smiles when a poor woman opens an account. They encourage her to all sorts of indiscretions, but show the cloven hoof soon enough when the bills grow a little old. Amy decided that storekeepers were all *Mephistopheleses*. They were very sweet to a poor *Marguerite* when she made her first appearance, but merciless when they came to collect the infamous penalties.

When one of these bills turned up on Lamoree's desk, he would become almost unbearably martyrlike. Martyrs are all very well in books, but in real life they make one long to give them the good old-fashioned reward.

Even Amy's resourceful patience was almost at an end, when Lamoree was called West for a long business trip that would keep him away for two months at least. He urged Amy to go with him, but she felt that it was less love than selfishness that actuated him. It was not so much that he wanted her for herself, as that he was suspicious of her and would not trust her alone in New York.

Nothing so wounds a sensitive soul as a lack of confidence, and Amy felt that common self-respect compelled her to refuse to be dragged away on any such grounds. Besides, she was in the midst of an important series of engagements with new acquaintances of the most broadening sort.

One man especially was bringing her out wonderfully. He encouraged her to be her best. She felt herself flowering out at last. Torrey Lyall was wealthy and of the highest social prestige. He had traveled everywhere and known everybody worth knowing and nobody that was not. He abounded in the most revealing anecdotes about people in high places. He told Amy things she had never suspected. It was an education in life just to talk to him.

And he entertained her so gracefully! It was a step in culture merely to hear him order a luncheon. His motorcar was the last word in modernity, and he showed her landscapes far up the river on both sides, landscapes of a beauty and majesty she had never imagined.

He praised her so deftly, so lavishly, too, that it gave her very soul new life, increased its ambitions, taught it new longings and new standards.

To give up this communion for the sake of a long ride in a stuffy railroad train and an indefinite stay at a hotel in a new and stupid Western town, would be a crime. Amy, in justice to herself and indirectly therefore to her husband, simply refused to go.





She whispered the name: "Nicolette Maynard." Lamoree sprang to his feet in a thrice of horror.

Lamoree took her decision with very poor grace and went his way.

It was fortunate for Amy that he had to go. She had lost many splendid hours with Mr. Lyall because she had had no free evenings. Now that her husband was on the other side of the continent, she found a new world opened to her. Now the long rides with Torrey Lyall swept her through regions made infinitely more beautiful by moonlight and moonshadow, regions of landscape and untraveled regions of soulscape.

The nights of New York gained a new meaning.

Torrey—she was calling him by his first name by now, of course, and he her by hers—Torrey kept saying: "If only you were not married, Amy my love! What couldn't we do? Where couldn't we go?"

There was something knightly about his tone. She found him a very Lancelot and suffered all the woes of Guinevere. But she could hardly find a suitable reply to Torrey Lyall's might-have-been's. She did not answer when he sighed:

"Why, oh why, didn't I see you first?"

But her impatience grew keen and her curiosity urgent as she realized the folly of marrying Jim Lamoree in such precipitate

haste. She naturally blamed him for denying her the riches of a Torrey Lyall.

One evening she grew bold enough to say to Torrey point-blank:

"Torrey, if I were free, would you marry me?"

"In a minute!" he cried. "How could I live without you? Why don't you divorce that old codger?"

"He gives me no cause," Amy moaned. A stranger might have felt a tang of regret in her confession. It was an odd thing to regret a husband's fidelity, but Amy was frantic almost to despair.

Torrey Lyall said slyly:

"If he won't give us a cause, we'll have to give him one." And Amy laughed bitterly. It was a laugh, but bitter. It was bitter, but it was a laugh.

One day a telegram came to her from the West. It said: "So lonely for you I can't wait to finish my business here but must dash home to my darling on the first train leaving tonight at eight due there Tuesday morning at nine forty-five. Hope you can come back with me, dearest love."

As luck would have it, Lamoree found the telegram there when he got home. Amy had motored to (Continued on page 112)

# Ride 'im Cowboy!



He tore up the earth in good shape, and I began to find fault with my saddle.

Written and

Illustrated by

Will James

THE first I seen of the Pilgrim was him a-standing on the porch of one of the cow-camps belonging to the Three Rivers Cattle Company. I'd rode up to that camp looking for work, and being that one of the wagons was to start from there that spring, I figgered the chances of getting on with that outfit would be pretty good.

The Pilgrim is a-standing there as I rides closer, and I can't help but notice the outfit he's wearing; him being a good-sized young feller, it was all the more noticeable, and that hat he wore would of drawed my attention if nothing else would of. It was the kind of hat the Indians used to wear a lot, with real high crown and stiff wide brim; the face under it was round and smooth, hadn't seen much wind or sun. Around his neck and

hanging down quite a ways was a big yellow neckerchief; his shirt-sleeves was rolled up; and at his waist was a big wide belt loaded down with nickel spots. The wooden handle of an old cap-and-ball six-shooter (the kind that shoots back and forth at the same time) was showing itself above that belt, and a long-bladed skinning knife was close to it. His pants was rammed inside a pair of "hand-me-down" boots with heels turned over, and a-hanging on them boots was a big fancy pair of cheap spurs, and they was upside down.

But that wasn't the best of it; that pose he was holding is what got me; it reminded me some of the movie comedy bad-man, and the way he was looking at me I was wondering if he was trying to look tough or natural.

There, I figured, was sure a product of the dime novels, the best or worst I ever seen. I could see he sure thought he was some cowboy and that he hadn't as yet been woke up to the fact that no cowboy ever looks that way, and I thinks that if this is a example of what the outfit is hiring as riders, I'd better be drifting on.

I could see he didn't like me sizing him up the way I was, and looking tough, he hooks his thumb up on his belt and close to the old shooting iron. Whether that was a threat or a bluff, I wasn't worried, and still a-setting on my horse, I looks up under the big Indian hat and I smiles at him.

"Where can I find the cow foreman?" I asks real pleasant.

"I don't know," he says, but about then the cook of the outfit, hearing us talking, comes out and informs me that the foreman and the boys ought to be in most any time.

"Turn your horse loose and come in," he says.

The Pilgrim had disappeared when I got back to the house again, and looking around I spots him out amongst the saddle horses on the meadow. He's trying to walk up to one of 'em but that pony snorts out his suspicions and runs off at a safe distance.

"Did you ever see anything like that before?" asks the cook, grinning as he points toward the Pilgrim. "I know I never did," he goes on, "and when I first seen him standing in the door I thought I'd been drinking again, but when he started a-talking I knowed it was real enough. He said he walked all the way from Sandy and that's thirty miles. He was packing them spurs he's got on, and a chain quirt, and when he got here he drank near a half a bucket of water. I couldn't make out why he was so dry on account that there's plenty of water on the way, and when I asked him the reason, he said *he had no cu> to drink out of*."

"You can think the way you please," goes on the cook, "but I'm sure there must be somebody camping on such folks' shoulder and protecting 'em."

It's sundown before I see any sign of the riders coming in. The Pilgrim is setting on the edge of the porch, and noticing me looking the direction of the dust the coming riders was making, he asks, "Is that the cowboys?" And from that a conversation started between me and him that was all questions and answers, I furnishing the answers.

His eyes was near popping out of his head as the foreman and the boys rode in; he was watching every move they made and enjoying a sight the likes of which I know he'd never seen before. He even forgot to look tough for a spell and the pose was plumb neglected till the riders begin stringing in from the corrals.

The circus appearance the Pilgrim was making couldn't help but be noticed by the boys, but that was all; it was just noticed, and even though there might of been a lot of wondering done

**THE** author and illustrator of this characteristic narrative of the range has been a cowboy since he was old enough to fork a horse. He's sung to cows o' evenings from Dome, Arizona, to Calgary. At present he's second boss of a snug little place in Nevada, his wife being the first. Will doesn't write as he does because he wants to, but because it's the only way he can. Both as author and as artist he's the real thing—a top hand; and his book, "Cowboys North and South," is by way of becoming an American classic.

as to how that *hombre* happened, or how hard it was to keep from laughing out loud at his actions and outfit, there was none of it that could be seen. By all appearances they just glanced his way and went on to set at the table that the cook had waiting for 'em, no remarks being made as regards to the new arrival.

The foreman came along, and giving us the usual once-over that's due to a stranger, followed it up with a "Howdy!" and the invitation to come in and eat.

The whole outfit had sized me up at first glance and had already took me in as one of the boys. They'd forgot about me as a stranger, but the Pilgrim was still to be accounted for. He was a puzzle and hard to make out. There was no sign of curiosity,

but there was a still atmosphere circling that table that wasn't natural; everybody was quiet, and *there* was the hint or the chance left wide open for the Pilgrim to speak. The silent space was for him to use.

But the Pilgrim either didn't take the hint, or wanted the others to take the lead on the conversation, or else thought it best to keep quiet. Anyway, nothing was said till the meal was near over and the foreman started the talk on the work of that day. The Pilgrim was listening—and had no intentions of interrupting that I could see.

I figured it must of took a lot of courage and rehearsing when sometime afterward, as the riders are gathered and talking at one end of the house, the Pilgrim busts in the middle of the conversation and looking straight at the foreman asks: "How's the chances of getting a job cowboying on this ranch?"

The foreman wasn't looking for that, and the question made him grin before he could think. Finally he gets serious again, and wanting to be easy on the boy he says: "Yes, I'll put you on if you can ride."

"Well, I can sure ride," says the Pilgrim. "I can ride anything." And hooking both thumbs on his



Right about then the rope tightened, and the steer was rolled a few times.



wide belt, he looks around real ferocious, like he dared anybody to doubt it.

There's symptoms all around that his remark aint being took serious, and some of the boys had to pull their hat brims down considerable.

"Sure," says the foreman as he stares hard at nothing, "that's what I want, is good riders."

IT was daybreak when we're woke up by the cook grinding coffee. We all take turns at the washbasin and the Pilgrim follows right in our tracks, missing nothing. A couple of cigarettes are built, and breakfast is ready, after which there's no time lost in getting toward the corrals. The "cavvy-wrango" had brought the horses in, and they was all there to pick from for another day's riding.

"Are you looking for work?" asks the foreman as he hangs back from the rest and waits for me.

"That's what I come here for," I says, and after arguing some on the wages and finally agreeing, my string of ponies was pointed out to me.

The foreman is in the corral dragging his rope and looking for a certain horse to pile his loop on. A big, high-headed savena horse is circling wild and keeping as far from any human as he can get; then the foreman's rope sails out and the loop settles over that same pony's head and draws up back of his ears; the other end of the rope goes around the snubbing-post, and as that horse runs close by, figgering on a grand get-away, the slack is picked up on the rope and he's stopped sudden. The snubbing-post had turned him, the same as it's turned and held many like him. He made a pretty picture of fighting horseflesh when he hit the end of that rope. His hair-trigger muscles handled that big frame of



I figgered it a miracle when as the dust cleared, the Pilgrim was still in the saddle.

his as though it was a feather and seemed like he was just aching for a hand to touch him so as to give him an excuse to bust loose.

I've seen plain reading, reading of the kind that stands out in big letters and is easy to make at a glance, but none of it I ever seen was so easy to make out as what you'd get with just a peek at that pony's head. From his quivering nostrils to the tip of his small ears made a "dead line" for all that walked on two legs and packed a rope, and them sunk eyes of his, they showed a hate the likes which I'm not wanting to feel against any human or critter. That horse was real poison, and I'm not exaggerating any when I say that a man-eating tiger would be a pet compared to what the foreman had piled his loop onto.

"Where's that Pilgrim?" asks the foreman as he looks around, and at the same time makes sure the savena has plenty of rope to play on.

"Here I am," says that *hombre* as he shows hisself and prances to the foreman, who sizes him up for a sign of fear. But there wasn't any. It was a case of where ignorance is bliss; and right then the foreman starts in on him. "Last night," he says, "you passed the remark that you could ride anything; well, here's a hunk of horseflesh you can try your hand at." And giving him the rope that held the savena, he walks off a ways and turns pointing a finger at the Pilgrim.

"You took in a lot of territory when you passed that remark, young feller, and don't think I'm taking advantage of you with that horse, cause he's been handled already, and a few has rode him; but I will warn you, watch out for all and every part of that pony."

My breath was took away some when I seen the Pilgrim take the rope and start walking toward the savena. I knowed he was fourflushing when he said he could ride anything, or maybe he really thought he could; but, anyway, I was afraid of what that horse might do to him, and I'd been mighty glad if it'd been me that was to ride the savena instead.

The foreman wouldn't listen to me when I told him how I felt about it, and all he said was: "Never mind, Bill; that *hombre* is old enough to have sense, and big enough to take care of himself if he don't go too far. What he's going to learn from that horse will do him a heap of good, no matter whether his ambitions might be to become a cowboy or president."

"But he don't know what he's up against with that horse."

"Sure he don't know, and he's so conceited that nobody could tell him, so I figgers in a case like that, strong medicine is needed."

Whether it was conceit or ignorance or both, that Pilgrim sure was short on knowledge and fear of horseflesh. The savena was looking at him the same as a cougar would look at a wolf-pup—an enemy to destroy and put out of the way as soon as possible—only there was something about that enemy that kinda puzzled the horse, which was the whole of the reason why the Pilgrim wasn't turned to dust right there and then.

The horse knowed humans, but he'd

never before seen any like that one. He wasn't packing the hated rope, and he left himself wide open to destruction. I think that horse was kind of hoping that human didn't come any closer, cause if he did, he'd have to hurt him, for even though this one was some different to the others, he hated him just as much as he did all humans.

The hate that savena carried for man was natural. He must of been born with it, for as the foreman told me, all that horse ever wanted to do from the day he was run in to be broke, was fight, and see how much damage he could do to them that handled him.

"He aint killed anybody—yet," says the foreman, "but that



Seeing his victim getting away, he makes a running jump. But he was just a shade too late.

ain't his fault. The twister that first handled him was a good man and had a heap of patience, and I remember one time when the savena flew at him with teeth and all four feet, that cowboy got through the corral poles just in time, and half his chaps was missing. That horse had the other half between his teeth.

"When the twister picked himself up and tallied up on the damage, he just looked at the horse and he says: 'I'll have to be more firm with you, young feller.'"

"He *was* more firm, but there was no abuse done. A good cowboy never abuses a horse, anyway, but with all the coaxing we've done, that horse is only getting worse; but we'll break him, even if we have to get peeved at him."

Through all this talk we'd been watching the Pilgrim and the horse. A few other boys had gathered around, and we was ready each with a loop in case anything did start. The Pilgrim had been standing there, seemed like, wondering what to do. Something in the expression of that horse's eyes kinda warned him that all wouldn't be well if he stepped any closer. He'd stopped—both him and the horse watching one another, so the lead was left to the Pilgrim and there was the snag. He didn't know what to do. For once since we'd first seen him he showed sense. He was leary of touching that horse, and then he sees us a-standing there—

Whether he was ashamed of himself for hesitating in what he'd said he could do, or the fear that we'd see through his bluff, I couldn't make out, but seeing us watching that way was to him a call for action, if he was a cowboy. I'd liked to seen him quit there, but nothing doing. The doggone fool holds up one hand, and talking away, he starts for the savena.

A half a dozen loops was raised where it'd only need a flip to make a catch, for we was expecting that horse to come and meet the Pilgrim halfway as he most always did, but we was mighty surprised when instead of making a grab for the Pilgrim's hand when it was within a few inches of his nose, he just let out a snort that meant both hate and disgust, and circled away far as the rope on the snubbing-post would let him.

"God protects 'em," says one of the boys, and I figgered no better proof was needed as to the truth of that remark.

There *was* something in the actions of that horse which told plainer than words that he wasn't free to do as he wanted. "He wasn't acting natural," as the foreman said, and somehow we thought of a Protecting Hand on that Pilgrim's shoulder. His ignorance of the danger he was in called for a protection that

wasn't human, and *that*, we figgered, is all that saved him so far.

He's circling around and trying to get within touching distance of the savena, who's still doing his best to keep out of reach. That goes on for quite a spell, and most every minute we kindr expect that horse to turn and make a victim of that *hombre* pestering him. Finally he does turn, but not before the Pilgrim has the horse cornered and where he has to go through him to get away.

Four ropes settled around that pony's neck quicker than you could wink, but the savena had no intentions of harming the Pilgrim. There was hate in his eyes when he whirled and struck, and he could of killed him right there, but *something* kept him from it, and as it was, he just tore his shirt, knocked his gun out of his belt, and set him down out of breath.

That went some toward taking the conceit out of him, and when we helped him up, he'd forgot to look tough. Instead he was white around the gills, and I think he still had a vision of the savena's mean-looking head as he'd turned on him and showed him the size of his front hoofs. Maybe he had a hint of what *might* of happened, but I doubt it, for soon as he was steady on his feet again, he remarked that he wanted to ride that horse.

The foreman got half peeved at that, not so much for the danger that was in it as for the uselessness in that greenhorn trying, for even though the savena's bucking wasn't as bad as his fighting, it took a real hand to set him, and the foreman had no hankering of losing any more time and just seeing somebody get throwed. There was a long ride cut out for that day, and wanting to get things over soon as possible, he turns our way and says:

"All right, boys, saddle up that horse for him. If telling him that he can't handle or ride that horse wont do, we'll just have to show him."

The savena was front-footed and blindfolded, for at the sight of us he meant murder once more; the saddle was eased on his slick back and cinched up to stay. All was ready.

The Pilgrim was shaky in the knees, but whether it was nerve he had, or just plain ignorance of what he was up against, one or the other kept him a-coming. We seen that he got his seat and told him where to keep his feet, along with all that was necessary to give him a fair chance, and then we take off the anchors that kept the savena to earth.

The savena stands there awhile, legs (Continued on page 111)

Illustrated  
by  
Will Foster



# Reddy Rolls Her Own

By

Viola Brothers Shore

*Viola Shore spends her summers at the Kindle Beach of which she writes in this delightful tale of very modern femininity. That being true, it seemed reasonable to assume that characters as lively as those in this story must have prototypes there. But when the writer was asked, she merely smiled and said: "I could show you the dog."*

WALLY COLLINS was back at Kindle Beach with two new dogs. Four years before, after the unfortunate termination of his affair with Helen, the more beautiful of the blonde Pepper twins, he had abruptly shut up the Grand Manor, as he called his three-room shack on the sand dunes overlooking the ocean, a mile beyond the straggling bungalows that marked the end of the Kindle Beach summer colony. And no direct word had been heard from him since.

Kindle Beach never knew what really happened in that romantic quadrangle, consisting of the beautiful and popular Pepper

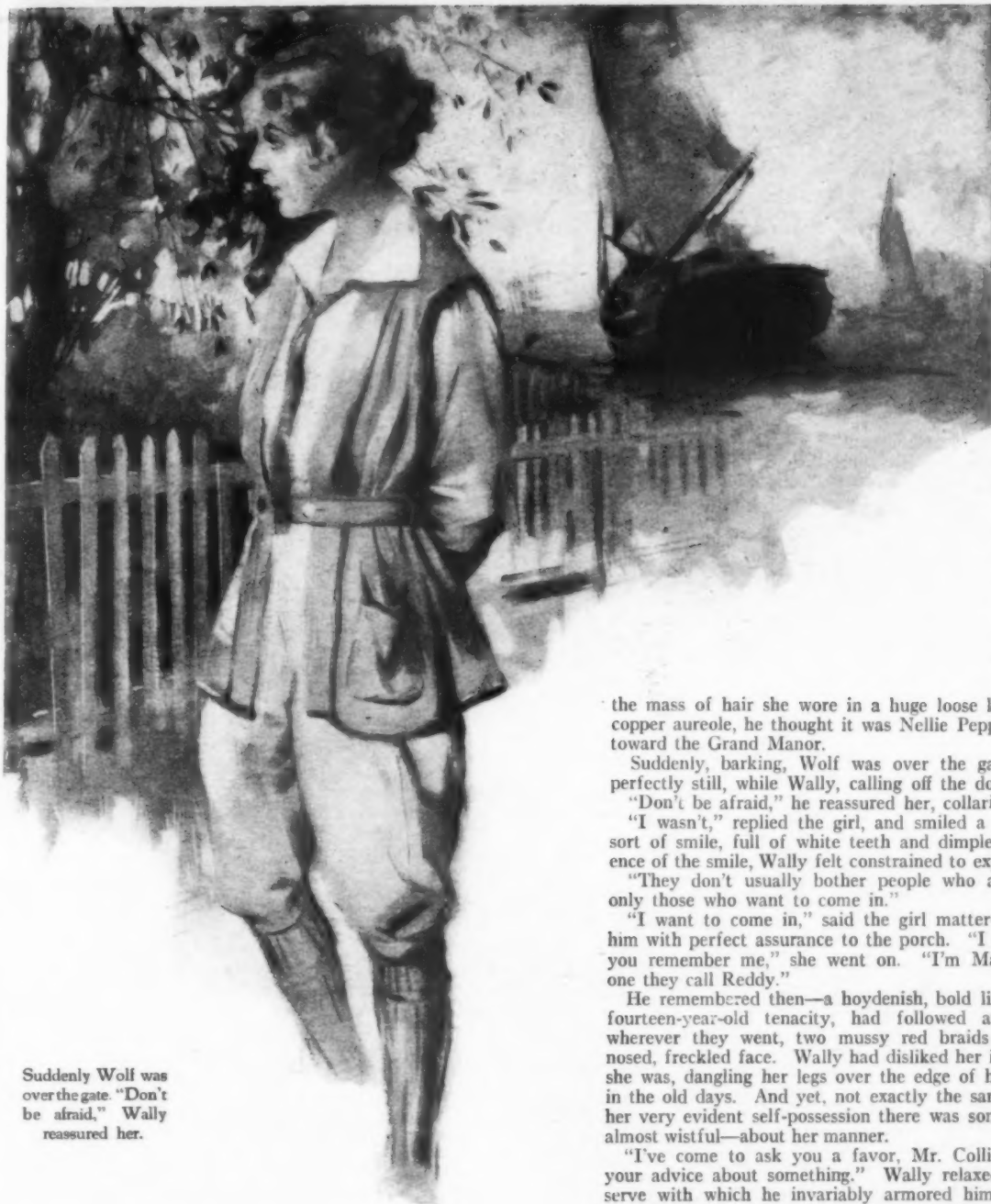
twins Helen and Angelica—or Nellie and Gellie as they were called—and Wally Collins and his chum Jim Warren, the blond and happy-go-lucky young heir to the Warren fortune. Wally, a tall, brown-haired, reserved young man in some way connected with the motion pictures, lived at the Manor with his pedigreed police pup Ranger. He was supposed to be engaged to Nellie Pepper; and the other two, Gellie and Jim, who were always with them, were presumed to be heading toward the same felicitous state.

And then suddenly one day the Manor was abandoned, and Wally Collins and his dog Ranger had disappeared. And the next the Beach knew, Jim Warren and Nellie Pepper were married, and Gellie had left for a trip abroad—some said, to nurse a broken heart. But the following summer the news arrived that she had married the son of an English peer.

The next Kindle Beach heard of Wally Collins was when his dog Ranger appeared in a moving picture, in which the critics said he carried off the honors from his so-called human associates. Naturally, Kindle Beach followed with more than ordinary interest the Ranger pictures.

And then suddenly, one day in June, Wally Collins appeared at Duntze's General Store with two police dogs in leash. But





Suddenly Wolf was over the gate. "Don't be afraid," Wally reassured her.

when Kindle Beach rushed to meet him with expressions of friendliness, they found themselves met with a disconcerting frigidity. Stuck-up, they called him, forgetting how, even before his success with Ranger, he had repulsed any attempts at intimacy.

After that, once a week, smoking a dirty-looking pipe, and wearing messy-looking gray trousers and a gray flannel shirt open at the neck, a lightish stubble almost obliterating the vertical cleft in his chin, he appeared at Duntze's store for provisions, which he stacked on a toy express wagon and trailed behind him.

Young people, running up the beach after a swim, or walking along under the moon, saw him reading or smoking in his couch swing, or romping with his dogs far up on the dunes. The dogs growled at passers-by, and one snapped at the hand a boy reached out to caress him. It was evident the inhabitants of the Grand Manor desired nothing of Kindle Beach, and grudgingly it gave them their desire. After a while, however, the Beach forgave Wally Collins' misanthropy; people connected with the movies are supposed to be a little queer.

One afternoon late in July, Wolf and Pocahontas set up an ominous growling, and Wally looked up from his book to see a

slim girl in breeches, with a sleeveless jacket over her silk blouse, picking her way among the assortment of defunct grapefruit, canteloupe, catsup, and magnesia bottles which outgoing steamers sent ashore as a sort of farewell message, and which Kindle Beach, not concerning itself beyond its board and cement limits, had not cleared away. For a moment it seemed to Wally Collins that the horizon had begun to reel, and a feeling of vertigo assailed him. For until the sun caught

the mass of hair she wore in a huge loose knot, making of it a copper aureole, he thought it was Nellie Pepper who was walking toward the Grand Manor.

Suddenly, barking, Wolf was over the gate. The girl stood perfectly still, while Wally, calling off the dog, approached.

"Don't be afraid," he reassured her, collaring Wolf.

"I wasn't," replied the girl, and smiled a flashing, unexpected sort of smile, full of white teeth and dimples. Under the influence of the smile, Wally felt constrained to explain:

"They don't usually bother people who are just going by—only those who want to come in."

"I want to come in," said the girl matter-of-factly, preceding him with perfect assurance to the porch. "I don't know whether you remember me," she went on. "I'm Margaret Pepper—the one they call Reddy."

He remembered then—a hoydenish, bold little thing who, with fourteen-year-old tenacity, had followed and clung to them wherever they went, two mussed red braids framing her snub-nosed, freckled face. Wally had disliked her intensely. And here she was, dangling her legs over the edge of his swing, exactly as in the old days. And yet, not exactly the same. For in spite of her very evident self-possession there was something disarming—almost wistful—about her manner.

"I've come to ask you a favor, Mr. Collins—that is, I want your advice about something." Wally relaxed somewhat the reserve with which he invariably armored himself with women—particularly bold young ones who sought him out. He supposed he was an old fogey, but he hated the whole generation of flappers. Although he was only twenty-eight, he felt he belonged to a different age—one with different ideals and different manners.

"She wants to go into the movies," he figured.

"I suppose," she went on, "you wonder why on earth I should come to you. But the fact is, most of the people I go with are such kids. You're so much older and more experienced—"

Wally let it pass. He must seem like a fairly old-timer to a youngster. He liked the way her eyes, exactly the color of the sky which framed her head, sought him out. Troubled, and yet unwavering—disconcertingly so.

"Of course, my folks are out of the question. Folks always are. . . . And another thing: I wouldn't want this to get around. And I know you wouldn't consider it a juicy morsel to gossip about."

To conceal a smile, he reached over and buried his hand in the silky back of Wolf, who thumped his tail lazily but appreciatively. All youngsters liked to be taken seriously, he knew.

"You can count on me, Miss Margaret, to consider whatever you tell me as entirely confidential."

She flashed a look at him so full of gratitude—or at least that

was to what he ascribed its warmth—that he decided quite conclusively he no longer disliked the one member of the Pepper household for whom he had had a really serious distaste in the days when all the others had seemed beyond perfection.

"I'm not used to being called Margaret," she volunteered, "unless it's something terribly serious like a graduation—or a suspension—or a fine for speeding. It sort of awes me. . . . Although, this is pretty serious—"

He dropped his patronizing manner. "What's the matter, Reddy? In trouble?"

The blue eyes grew, if possible, more luminous. "Well, not exactly. . . . I'm in love—"

Wally started—not only at the exposure of so personal a matter, but at the intensity of her manner.

"Well—well—" he began—then decided that sounded too superior, so he said, with a show of interest: "Is that so?"

She nodded, gazing absently out over the ocean to where a vertical line against the sky marked the passing of a schooner.

"I'm awfully in love—" She spoke dreamily, to Wally's increasing embarrassment.

"Well," he inquired, "just how can I be of service?"

Abruptly her musing manner vanished. "I want you to tell me how I can get him," she announced in a businesslike tone.

It almost took his breath away, but she went on, solemnly: "I want to make him marry me."

"But my dear child, has he said definitely he would not?"

"No, he's never said anything about it. In fact, he doesn't even know me—yet." And before he could put in a word, she added: "Of course, he knows who I am. In Kindle Beach you know who everybody is, without ever having spoken to them."

"But, Reddy, if he's never even spoken to you, you can't be so terribly in love with him," he protested.

"Oh, but I am," she assured him earnestly. "You see, I've known him for years. I've never dreamed about anybody else. Of course," she admitted, "I've flirted and had beaux and all that— But from the first minute I ever saw him, I felt that he was—different. I have a sort of instinct about him. I know that I could understand him—and make him happy."

OF course it was all absurd, but it was not Wally's place to tell her so. He could not see why she felt that she had to do anything about it.

"I must—before we all go back to the city and I lose this golden opportunity. Besides, some other girl may get him. And I just wouldn't want to go on living."

"Now, Reddy, people don't fall in love that way with men they hardly know."

"The Peppers do,"—a twinge of pain shot across his face, but she did not appear to notice,—"the red ones. It's a tradition in our family. You see, you only knew the twins. You never knew any red Peppers."

He had to admit that he had not, and then inquired whether the object of this particular Red Pepper's undying affection was anybody he knew.

"Mm,"—she pursed her lips speculatively,—"everybody down here knows him. But if you don't mind, I'd rather not tell his name. I'll call him Archibald—for the time being."

He did not wish to appear unsympathetic, but he really did not see that he could be of any use.

"Oh, but you can," she interrupted. "You see, I lie awake night after night, thinking, 'I must do something!' and I thought of a plan. But it's kind of daring, and I have so much at stake. So I thought if I could just put this up to somebody who wouldn't be prejudiced"—she seemed to be picking her words carefully—"and who would still give me good advice. And I thought of you. I've always had a great respect and admiration for you—and I knew you had a practical way of looking at things—and still you've got a feeling for romance too."

He disclaimed it, but she went on: "So I thought I'd put it up to you—if it's not too much of an imposition. I know you don't like intruders—"

"I haven't encouraged visitors," he admitted, "but I'm very glad indeed you ran in, in spite of my churlishness."

"Thank you," she said gravely. "And I'll try not to take up too much of your time. Here's what I want to ask. Do you think there's anything disgraceful in being in love with a man—in feeling that other men just don't stack up beside him, and that you'd give up anything in the world for him?"

"Why, no—of course not."

"Well, then, do you think it would be an awful thing if I went to see him and told him about it?"

He looked at her in utter amazement. "You mean—call on a man you don't know and tell him you—"

She said it for him: "Tell him I love him."

He dropped his casual manner and leaned toward her earnestly.

"Oh, my dear, you mustn't."

Her face fell. "Oh—"

"No, really—you mustn't," he repeated firmly. "He'd put you down in his mind for a—silly little chit."

SHE regarded him searchingly, real distress in her face. "Is that what you think of me?"

"Oh, no, my dear," he reassured her. "That's quite different. I've known you a long time—that is, in a way—and you came to see me for a definite reason."

"But if I hadn't," she demanded, "if I'd just come to see you, you'd think I was—" She caught her underlip beneath a pointed, shiny tooth.

"I'd think you were very silly," he told her, "and so would your young man."

"But what if I found some excuse for going to see him—"

He shook his head.

"—that he couldn't see through?" she persisted. "He's rather simple."

"No man is so simple," he said decisively, "that he can't see when a girl is running after him."

"And if he did see?"

"He'd pack you up and send you home to your mother the minute he suspected you."

"The very minute?"

"The very minute," he responded with finality.

"Then there isn't anything you would advise me to do?"

"There isn't anything a girl can do unless a man cares for her."

"But I'm sure he would if he knew me. I'd spend my whole life trying to help him make a success of his. It does seem a pity I can't tell him that—on account of a lot of silly old conventions."

"It isn't just a question of conventions," he explained gently.

"It's something more basic than that. If he's the right man for you, he'll want you—and go after you—and you won't have to do anything about it."

"But don't you think there'd be a chance of a man wanting me—after he'd got used to having me around?"

He shook his head. "Not a chance. The only thing you can do is wait until he notices, himself, what a—nice girl you are."

"But suppose he shouldn't? I'm not very beautiful, you know."

He regarded her critically. "You have extraordinary eyes—"

"Yes, but I have an awfully big mouth, don't you think?"

Wally regarded that feature also. He never remembered noticing a girl's mouth before. Certainly it was large and somewhat willful. But it seemed to be beautifully formed and vividly red. And—well, yes, inviting.

"No," he announced judiciously, "I should say you had a very nice mouth. And I'm certain if he has any eyes at all, Archibald will discover, of his own accord, what a delightful person you are."

She rose to go. "It's been awfully good of you to take all this trouble for me," she said gravely, extending her hand.

"No trouble at all," he assured her. "Sorry I couldn't be of any real help."

"Oh, but you don't know how much you have helped me. There's only one thing more, Wal—I mean, Mr. Collins."

"Oh, come," he commanded, "you used to call me Wally—"

"All right—Wally. Just one thing more. How do you think I ought to dress so he'll notice me?"

He scratched his smooth brown head. He had to release her hand to do it, and realized for the first time that he had been holding it. "I don't think that matters much."

"Like this?"—indicating the breeches.

"Well—perhaps a little more—feminine. Not a lot of frills and things, but—you know. . . . But of course, that's only my—"

"That's what I want—a man's point of view. What color do you think a man would like?"

He squinted at her appraisingly. "Why don't you try a sort of blue—the color of your eyes?"

"That's a thought!" exclaimed Reddy, as though she had not been wearing blue practically all her conscious life.

HE took her as far as the board walk, Wolf and Pocahontas trotting at his heels.

"Shall I—let you know if anything happens?" she volunteered as he shook her hand at parting.

"Yes—do," he urged, with genuine cordiality. "I'd really like to know."



Wally threw sand at an inoffensive crab. . . . Reddy asked: "Wally, do you think it helps any, to make a man jealous?"

"WHAT do you suppose Reddy's up to?" Helen Warren demanded of her mother. "I saw her actually pressing that old hydrangea blue dress that she never would wear because it was too girly-girly."

Mrs. Pepper shrugged placid shoulders and continued to sew beads on a white evening dress belonging to her youngest. "Why don't you ask her?"

"Huh!" Helen almost dropped a stitch. "All the satisfaction I'd get out of Reddy! But she never went near the kitchen of her own free will before in her life. She must be after something."

"Whatever it is," vouchsafed Mrs. Pepper, not without pride, "I dare say she'll get it. She isn't a Red Pepper for nothing."

"I guess I made my original mistake in being born a blonde," said Helen with some of the acid of an old bitterness in her voice.

"No, my dear," Mrs. Pepper smiled gently. "You've never failed to get pretty much your own way. And one Red Pepper is as much as any family can comfortably handle."

"I wonder," Helen went on speculatively, "if it's got anything to do with Wally Collins?"

"I don't think I'd worry about Reddy," her mother replied. "Besides, I'd rather see her wax romantic over Wallace than any other young man I know."

Helen smiled a peculiar smile—as though she rather scouted the possibility of any intrusion on the empire she had cast away.

HE could not have told how he knew, the moment the dogs started barking, that it was Reddy. He turned out of the hammock and went down the path to meet her. After all, if one had ladies calling, even very young ladies, one owed them certain attentions. He was rather glad to see her. The reason being, he told himself, that it was a sort of discipline. Reddy was so like the Nellie he had known, in spite of the difference in coloring, that it was a shock every time he looked at her. A series of these minor shocks would in time render him immune.

At sight of him she became radiant.

"Well," he inquired, after he had made her comfortable in a wicker chair, "what tidings?"

"I've managed to meet him," she announced, "and I think he likes me—a little."



"Of course he does. How could he help it? So then you didn't need me, after all."

"Oh, don't say that," she protested. Then, indicating her dress: "Behold the trap!"

"The trap?"

"Yes—you know—you told me to wear blue."

"Oh—I'd forgotten. It's very nice. You're very pretty in it."

After a few moments Reddy deftly led the talk to dogs. Dogs were the one thing Wally liked to talk about—especially Ranger. There was not much to tell yet of Wolf and Pocahontas, whom he was training to play opposite Ranger, and also as possible understudies. Wally often encountered Ranger fans, but seldom one more thoroughly posted than Reddy, who had seen every one of the Ranger pictures dozens of times, and read every line that appeared about the wonder dog in the magazines.

WALLY enjoyed talking to her. And he liked, too, the way she behaved toward Wolf and Pocahontas, neither shrinking nor putting out her hand to pet them when they sniffed about her ankles. It made her a fairly comfortable visitor.

He felt a little embarrassment, as of an interloper, whenever the talk turned to the absent Archibald. Wally disliked the name intensely. In fact, he felt an indefinable dislike toward the young man too. He had a general contempt for the sort of young men girls ran after.

"Do you think I ought to bob my hair?" was one of the questions she asked him.

"I think you are the best judge of that."

"Well, I wanted a man's point of view. Everybody tells me not to—but I would in a minute if I thought he'd like it better."

And without warning, she lifted her hand and removed a couple of pins, and down over her shoulders and about her waist tumbled a mass of copper-colored hair. Wally had never seen so much hair. It gave him a curious sensation—uncomfortable, embarrassed, as though it were something he should not see. And at the same time he felt a desire to run his fingers through it. Both these undefined and indefinable emotions converted themselves into a resentment against the man for whom such a sacrifice might be made. His dislike was no longer a vague thing.

"I think it would be a great pity," he said. "I never saw such lovely hair."

With a veiled look in her eyes, she wound it into a knot and pinned it in place. He had a sense of relief when it was up again. And yet, after that, he became rather conscious of it. It seemed as though those three pins could hardly hold that mass of hair, and that it must come tumbling down again. He found himself regarding it from time to time with misgivings. Although why he should have concerned himself with whether or not a girl's hair would come tumbling down, he could not have told.

Before she left, he showed her through the Manor. She stopped before the books in open shelves beside the rough stone fireplace.

"That's what I ought to be doing," she remarked with a sigh, "—improving my mind, instead of wasting the summer."

"I dare say your mind is good enough." ("For Archibald!" was his unspoken thought.)

"I wonder if you hate lending your books the way I do. I'd rather people borrowed my family or something I didn't need and hadn't selected myself—"

It would never have occurred to Wally to lend his books. But after he had sent her home with three under her arm, in spite of her protests, he was rather pleased with himself. "She'll have to return them. I kind of like having her drop in. She's not any bother. It's good for a man to talk to a girl now and then. Keeps you from getting altogether rusty. And she doesn't regard me as a man but a mixture of big brother and Moses. Of course I'm not a bit of help to her about this Archibald. But at any rate, I can keep an eye on her. I'd hate to see her throwing herself away on a fool that probably hasn't the brains to see what a really nice kid she is."

However, according to the reports Reddy brought daily, Archibald appeared to be developing a deeper interest. Nevertheless, Wally's distrust of the young man, instead of abating at these proofs of discrimination, augmented if possible. He was certain the fellow was in some way taking advantage of the guilelessness of Reddy.

AFTER ten days of steady progress Reddy reported the first rift. "He found out I ran up the beach with you and the dogs afternoons, and you'll never believe it, but he was jealous of you! Of you—fancy!" The very idea threw Reddy into such

spasms of merriment that she did not notice that Wally was not joining in her laughter—although he felt a vague subterranean satisfaction at having caused the heart-wrecker some annoyance. "Of course," she went on, "I couldn't let on that the real reason I came to see you was on account of him, and so I made out that you and I were very old, dear friends."

"Well, we are, aren't we?"

She turned over on the sand, where her vivid bathing suit made a striking bit of color against the almost colorless background. "You're the best friend I've got," she said seriously, "but I don't see what I have to give you."

"We don't have friends for what they give us—but because we like them."

"Do you really like me, Wally?" She lifted her eyes, and he noticed that beside them the sky was of a certain wan grayness.

"Of course I do, Reddy."

"Why?"

"Why? Because I think you're one of the sweetest girls I've ever known."

Wally threw a handful of sand at an inoffensive crab, and there was a silence until Reddy asked: "Wally, do you think it helps any, to make a man jealous?"

"No!" he exploded with an irritation he took pains to cover in his next remark. "A girl who cared anything about a man would not try to make him suffer."

"But don't you think if a man imagines you're interested in somebody else, it stimulates his interest in you?"

"Not at all," he answered, from the pain of an old wound. "I have no patience with a girl who would deliberately rouse in a man such a destructive emotion as jealousy."

"Maybe you're right," she said meekly, her face turned from him. "And so perhaps I'd better not keep running out here—as long as he's jealous of you."

OF course she was perfectly right, and he liked her for it. Still, for the next three days he found himself reading with only one eye on the page. And whenever a speck appeared on the horizon and did not materialize into some shade of blue, an uncomfortable depression made itself manifest in the pit of his stomach.

On the fourth day he decided to run into the village for provisions. Things were pretty dull at the Manor. It seemed a man could get too much of even a good thing—like solitude. His purchases completed, he did not hurry back, but lingered along the one paved street of Kindle Beach, examining with interest the six uninspired shop-windows. In one of them he saw candy, and it occurred to him he should have a box at the Manor—in case anybody did drop in.

The next day, as he was cooking his lunch over the kerosene stove, she burst into the kitchen.

"I thought I'd better bring back your 'Dance of Life' before you began to fear you'd lost it forever. . . . Mm! That smells good. What is it?"

"Ham and eggs. Had your lunch?"

"Nope."

He broke two more eggs into the sizzling pan. She watched with interest. "I'm ashamed to admit that I don't know the first thing about cooking. Men hate girls who can't cook, don't they?"

"Oh, I don't know—"

"But they like them better if they can," she pressed.

"Well, I guess men do admire girls who are able to shoulder their obligations."

"It's all right for you to know my dark secret. But if you ever meet Archibald, don't let on that I'm the kind of girl who refuses to shoulder her obligations."

He flipped the ham, and she watched in a sort of fascination. "Do you know, I think maybe I could learn to cook if somebody took the pains to teach me." She gave an involuntary look behind her, almost as though she expected her mother to rise out of space to confound her. Or perhaps the ghost of the Domestic Science instructor whose periods she had cut so ruthlessly.

"I'll teach you," he offered, with a feeling of guilt at so obvious a trap for return visits. But she did not seem to notice.

So the cooking lessons began. At home she had to invent an entire new series of alibis to account for her daily absences. Wally liked the idea. Not that she made much progress in the culinary art! But planning meals for somebody else gave him a new interest in his food. And her naïve enthusiasm was flattering.

She consulted him about other things too. And to please her, he went into all sorts of details about clothes and colors and styles. Wally had never known he had so many opinions—nor so much taste—in regard to women's clothes.



"But Wally, I didn't mind giving him up, really. .... I'd a hundred times rather give him up than you."

One day she asked him whether he thought Archibald would consider her anywhere near as good-looking as Nellie. He snorted. "You're better looking. You have more—I guess it's life or personality or something. When you come into a room, you light it all up."

"That's my hair," she suggested.

The next day, while Wally was preparing cutlets for their luncheon and she was standing beside him at the stove, she asked: "Wally, if he tries to—should I let him kiss me?"

"No!" He dropped a cutlet from his fork, and the hot fat splattered on her arm. She made no sound, but just the same, he swore under his breath. Girls were a nuisance. After all, why should he bother his head teaching her to cook for some other man? But, on the other hand, wasn't that the whole idea?

He answered her more fully while bandaging the arm. "Of course don't let him kiss you. Not if you expect him to think anything of you. It just cheapens you."

"But Wally—doesn't everybody kiss everybody nowadays?"

"What if they do? Maybe I'm old-fashioned, but I don't believe you ought to let a man kiss you unless he's really in love with you."

He thought a great deal about this fellow trying to kiss Reddy, and no matter how he looked at it, he didn't like it. In a way he felt responsible, since he was in her confidence, and her people seemed to know nothing about the affair. Although the idea was distasteful, he felt that perhaps he should look the fellow over. Luckily it was Reddy herself who gave him the chance.

AT the end of every season Kindle Beach gave a ball for the benefit of the Volunteer Fire Department and Life Guards. Reddy, who was selling tickets, came to see him in great excitement because Archibald was going to take her to the Dance! Wally allowed her to sell him a ticket, (Continued on page 148)

Written and Illustrated

by

George  
Gibbs

# Mad Marriage

*Far from typewriters, paint-tubes and easels, George Gibbs is at the present moment, he writes, motoring amid lovelier pictures than any artist ever painted. He is in Brittany, after a month's survey of the English countryside, and before he returns to America in late autumn, he will have slipped through France, Italy and Switzerland on rubber tires. Next year he plans to spend the summer painting in Cornwall.*

## *The Story So Far:*

JOSIE BRANT was lost in the rain, staring down into the canal, when Peter Randle came upon her. She had almost no money, and—she was going to have a baby.

"What could I do?" Randle explained to his fellow-artist Wingate. "I took her in, of course. I couldn't let her die of pneumonia, could I?"

"A baby. H'm! Where's her husband?" asked Wingate.

"I don't know."

"Don't you realize that these people in Red Bridge will say that the baby is yours?" inquired Wingate.

"I hadn't thought of that," said Peter. "But it isn't. And if they're going to talk, I don't see how the devil I can stop 'em."

Later, Peter went with Wingate to New York; and there, at a studio party, he met "Tommy" Keith, a wealthy bachelor girl, who lived at the Ritz and whose friends were growing disturbed over her partiality for a certain notorious Jack Salazar. It was this Salazar, indeed, whom Randle had come to New York to interview, on behalf of Josie Brant.

Peter quite simply explained the situation to Tommy Keith, and when Salazar himself put in an appearance, Peter backed up his story with a photograph of Salazar inscribed to Josie. An ugly scene followed, but eventually Tommy dismissed Salazar and forgave Peter his intrusion.

Later Peter sought out Salazar, but his efforts to make the fellow marry Josie met only derision and suggestions that Peter was trying to make use of another man to cover his own derelictions. Peter promptly sought satisfaction with his fists, and got it most competently, but he went back to Red Bridge feeling that his mission had been a failure. And now Peter's friends, including Tommy, began a series of attempts to make him see Josie as they did—as a scheming creature with an unsavory past who was taking brazen advantage of his kindness. Peter, however, refused to believe the gossip or to see in Josie anything worse than misfortune; and a little later, he married her. It was only after this

step—to Peter, irrevocable—was taken, that he learned that the lawyer cousin who managed his considerable fortune had speculated with it, and lost it.

Enough was salvaged from the wreck for immediate needs—and to give Josie the best of hospital care when it became necessary. Her baby died, however, and she was ill for some time. And she was very bitter against Peter for his carelessness with his money.

Then at last Peter sold a picture, and the proceeds tided them over for a further period. He lost a second sale, however, by his refusal to alter the painting, a sunrise, to match the purchaser's curtains. Josie upbraided him heartlessly for this. Relations between them grew more and more strained. Finally she took an abrupt departure for New York. And though she presently returned, it was only for a difficult interlude before she left again, and Peter knew she had gone back to her old way of life.

Journeying to New York in search of her, Peter called upon Tommy Keith, and accidentally learned that she had been the purchaser of the first picture he had sold. And somehow this discovery brought about revelation—the revelation of Tommy Keith's love for Peter, of his hitherto unrealized feeling for her. But—Peter had sworn to love and cherish Josie; and the oath was sacred to him.

That night Peter found Josie—in the company of Jack Salazar. Forcibly he took her away with him in a taxicab and set out to drive with her to Red Bridge, but on the way she escaped. Peter went back alone to Red Bridge and to his painting.

And now Tommy undertook a campaign to bring Peter's work to the attention of influential people. She succeeded admirably in this, and the sales of his paintings increased. Another result of Tommy's endeavors was a proposal of marriage from Judson Waite, a wealthy art connoisseur; but her feeling for Peter was steadfast, even though he refused to divorce Josie.

It was about this time that Josie called upon Tommy with a bright idea: she would divorce Peter, leaving him free to marry Tommy—in exchange for the sum of twenty thousand dollars. Tommy promptly had her shown out. (*The story continues in detail.*)

IF there was irony in the purchase of Peter's pictures by Mr. Judson Waite, there was a further irony in the interest of other collectors upon the mailing list of Mr. Lablache, who came and looked at Peter's paintings and predicted a great future for him. Two of the smaller canvases were sold at good prices, for Lablache was a skillful exhibitor and used the prestige that had come with the purchase of the painting by the Metropolitan in investing Peter's name with a sort of reverent dignity. "An eccentric fellow, Randle—not a great producer, but very sound. And honest with his art! Why, do you know—"

And then Lablache would tell the story of Peter's picture "Dawn on the Hills" and the curtains of Mrs. McFadden's breakfast-room. And so Peter's eccentricities, long a liability, were now to be an asset, for it is the custom of conventional people





Peter found Josie and caught her up in his arms. But a blast of flame beat him back as he strove to make his way out again.

to take pleasure in patronizing the unconventional. There was money in Peter's bank at Smithville, and the future seemed roseate.

Peter took some new paintings to Lablache and then went to see Josie. When she understood that he brought her money, she became suddenly quite polite and made him many promises. And Peter, whose money was not really money but just so much opportunity to provide immunity for Josie from the perils of bad company, gave her half of what he had in the bank in order that she might be more comfortable. He told her that Red Bridge with its quiet was what she needed, but she demurred to that. They parted, however, with Josie in an agreeable mood, and Peter went home hopeful that his visit had paved the way to a better understanding in the future.

**T**HE early spring found Peter outdoors again, prowling hopefully up and down the valley, a creature newly born to the sense of his ability and opportunities. He had found himself.

Tommy's note in reply to his letter of gratitude was the last

word that he was to have from her until May. But Peter heard of her frequently from Wingate, who reported that Tommy was often seen with Judson Waite, and that rumor said she would probably marry him. Peter was, of course, miserable, but since he had already decided that he had nothing to ask or expect of Tommy, his misery was not a new thing, even though it was considerably augmented.

And then one day Wingate's friend Lola Oliver wrote that Tommy had suddenly left New York for California. Lola was curious as to Judson Waite, who was still in New York, but Tommy had taken no one into confidence in regard to her affairs or her plans.

When Josie's money was gone, she of course wrote to Peter for more, and he found that her amiability was exactly to be measured by the generosity of his checks. A visit to her apartment made late in March revealed a number of unpaid bills for considerable amounts, which she produced with an air of dexterity and placed in Peter's hands, apparently quite forgetful of her promise to allow no bills to accumulate. Peter paid them but informed her with some firmness that all bills for necessities

should be sent at once to him, and that he would not be responsible in future for extraordinary expenses for wearing apparel, which must be bought out of the allowance in cash that he would give her. She gave the proposition her shrug of indifference and changed the conversation to one of sardonic inquiry as to the departure of Miss Keith from New York. She seemed to be very well informed as to Peter's affairs. He went uptown with a new sense of the futility of the whole arrangement.

Late one afternoon in May, Peter was up on the hills above the McVitty place, painting the view looking down the river. It was a large canvas, thirty-five by forty, and Peter was attempting the experiment, at Wingate's suggestion, of finishing it in one stretch of five hours. He had studied the motive often, and by his knowledge of the play of light had managed to get the canvas covered by five o'clock, the hour when the shadows fell over the western hills of the river, bringing into strong relief the brilliant color of the eastern bank.

Peter worked with a furious joy during the last hour of consummation. Color leaped into its place on the canvas. Forms grew. The thing was instinct with life, and Peter thrilled with the godlike joy of creation. In it, he forgot that there was any unhappiness, any misery in all the world.

And then suddenly—a breeze stirred and the light turned orange. . . . They say it takes two men to make a picture—one to paint it, the other to kill him when he has finished. Peter was wise enough to know that his picture was finished and that he could do no more. He'd done Wingate's trick—five hours without a rest; and he'd done it well. He'd show Fred there were other people who could finish a big canvas *au premier coup*. He wouldn't touch it—not even tomorrow in the studio; this was the sort of thing that couldn't be niggled with.

As Peter put his tobacco-pouch away, there was a sound behind him among the dead leaves of the orchard. A woman was standing in purple silhouette against the sky. The sun blinded him as he stared. And then the woman laughed, and Peter went stumbling with stiffened knees toward her. There was an unmistakable elegance about the small figure quite out of place in this rustic setting. Peter cried out in amazement.

"Hello, Peter," said Tommy coolly.

"How long—have you been—"

"Since last night. But I couldn't bear to disturb you."

He caught her by the hands and turned her to the light as though not yet quite certain about its being really Tommy.

"But I don't understand—"



She gave him a twisted smile but made no reply.

"What are you doing here? I—I thought you were in California."

"I might as well have been there when you were working," she said with a laugh.

"Well, but—what does it mean?"

"I've just come back; that's all."

"Oh! Back! I see."

"How stupid you are, Peter!" And then with a quick glance upward. "Aren't you going to kiss me?"

He did this, still bewildered, but Tommy drew away with a laugh.

"Why didn't you write me you were coming?" he asked.

"I don't know. Perhaps because I thought you might run away from me."

He grinned foolishly.

"Oh, I wouldn't do that, Tommy."

"I'm not so sure. You did, you know, when you gave me up."

"Yes," he said somberly, "so I did."

He seemed suddenly to be face to face with realities, but Tommy was still quite calm and smiling.

"Well, you see, my dear, the six months are past history. I've



He kissed her while she lay in his arms. . . . Josie entered at the open door from outside.

decided that I don't want to be given up. I came down here to tell you so."

Peter was staring at her fatuously. A situation such as this would have been astonishing to men less easily astonished than Peter. It seemed to him that he ought to be pretty desperate about it. But he wasn't, really. It was very difficult to be desperate with Tommy there before him smiling cheerfully. So Peter finally gave a sort of guffaw which resolved itself presently into laughter.

"Excellent," said Tommy coolly. "I always knew you had a sense of humor. Kiss me again, and then bundle up your traps. I'm going to take you home."

"You—"  
"Yes. The car is out in the lane. There's going to be another scandal in Red Bridge soon—so why not now?"

In reply to his questions, she told him that she was staying with the Wingates for a few days, but as there was a great deal for them to talk about, she expected, after she drove him home, that he would invite her to supper.

They supped on ham and eggs, fried potatoes, tea and strawberry jam, and then went to the studio, where Tommy fell into Peter's big chair, and Peter stood at the fender where he could

look at her, and smoked his pipe. It was an agreeable moment. They had the island to themselves. Martha was away. Soft airs came in through the open studio door. It seemed that nothing could harm them, nothing dismay. And so they enjoyed it as though aware that exchange of thought upon the topic nearest their hearts might break the spell of their contentment.

"Well, Peter, I suppose you're waiting for me to tell you all about everything, aren't you?"

"I don't seem to care about anything," said Peter gravely, "now that you're here."

"Don't you? But I think I'd better," she said with a smile at him. "First, I'd better tell you that I was sure the experiment wouldn't work when you insisted on running away. I'm awfully funny. I'm given to fixed ideas as you are, and I can't be jarred loose from them without a shock of some sort. I suppose you might say I'm stubborn—though you wouldn't admit for a moment that *you* were. Oh, don't be alarmed, my dear," she insisted suddenly when Peter frowned. "I'm excessively cheerful over the situation, and quite reconciled to everything. It has taken a good deal of thinking and a good deal of patience, and it has meant taking my whole life up by the roots, examining it and putting it back into fresh soil. But here I am again after six months of experimentation, enjoying your excellent society and wondering why I was so foolish as to deprive myself of it for so long."

Peter came forward eagerly, but she waved him back with an airy authority.

"No. I've thought all that out too. We're going to be the best friends that ever were in the world, but we're going to be only that. I want to be quite honest with you—as honest as you've been. When you went away, I suppose what hurt me most was the fact that your idea of duty could be more important than your idea of love, especially since my idea of your duty was quite different from yours. I knew that you were right, though—that things couldn't go on as they were going. And I made up my mind to forget you, eliminate you. I tried the old crowd—Jimmy and the rest. Then Judson Waite. I knew I needed him for you, but I found that that was all I needed him for. I wasn't tempted to marry him—not for a minute. He hadn't anything to offer me that I couldn't have bought myself if I'd wanted it, except a fearfully stodgy crowd that bored me to tears. So I went away. I'd learned that happiness was something that couldn't be bought just with money, and that love, even though it was unsuccessful, was greater than anything else in the world. If I hadn't known you loved me, Peter, I think, after what had happened, that I should have died."

"I adored you," declared Peter. "I adore you now."

"Thank you, dear," she replied softly. "I know it. And don't you see, that's what made it possible for me to look at things differently. I don't want anybody but you, but I'm quite calm about it. Perhaps you've noticed. I want you to marry me. It's the only thing I've ever wanted that I've ever been refused. I suppose that's the reason I want it most. Well, I'm not going to let it break my heart because you won't, and I'm not going to go rushing around trying to avoid you—when being with you is what I want. That's just common sense, isn't it?"

Peter smiled dubiously. "God knows," he answered, "whether it's common sense or not, but it's most satisfactory. There's no law against it; that's sure."

"I'm glad you see it that way," Tommy agreed. "So far as I'm concerned, Josie Brant can go to the devil."

"I think she's doing it, my dear," said Peter somberly after a moment. "I can't help her. She's out of my reach. All she cares about is the money I can give her."

"Little beast!" said Tommy composedly.

"I've given her all I could, but she's lost all sense of proportion," Peter went on. "Drugs—heroin. She said she got the habit in the hospital when she suffered so. I tried to get her to come down here where she can't get it, but she said she'd rather die. So I've cut down her allowance. She writes me wild letters now, when her checks don't come. I think I've taught her to need me again. That's my job, Tommy."

"Oh, I know," said Tommy. She rose and walked about. "And my job to sit by and see her do it!" She threw out her



arms with an expressive gesture. "Don't you think I'm noble, Peter! I do. Can't you see me growing old, with little spit-curls around my forehead, and a cap, a parrot and a couple of cats, just sitting somewhere near the great Peter Randle and waiting for Josie Brant to die?"

"Don't!" said Peter.

But Tommy had fallen gleefully into her new mood.

"I'm going to be a cheerful little old lady. You'll see. All pink and white and smiles. I'm thinking of taking a house down here somewhere this summer. I've done Europe until I was blue in the face. I've seen America first. The thought of the sea or mountains bores me. I like Red Bridge. It's a quiet little town. And there's a nice house near where you were painting today—"

"The McVittys!" gasped Peter.

"The McVittys'. They wouldn't mind moving out if I paid them enough, would they?"

"The McVitty family have lived there for a hundred and fifty years."

"Then it's time they moved. Wont you fix it, Peter? Please. It's so close I could just slip down here and put your house in order when you were out. Then I could give you tea and cakes every afternoon when you come in from the field. A spiritual marriage, Peter. What need we care for wives and things? I, Tommy, take thee, Peter, to be my wedded spiritual husband, to love, and obey—spiritually, of course. Don't you think that's a nice idea?"

"Until death do us part," said Peter gently. He put an arm around her and held her for a moment. "It almost seems like that already, since you've come back. Your—kindness is more than I deserve. I wanted to give you your chance, but you wouldn't take it. You've disarmed me with your—your loyalty and gentleness. When you pleaded with me to do something I thought I had no right to do, I could resist you. It's your—well, your submission, that hurts. There's something too much like martyrdom about it, gentle as it is."

He kissed her while she lay passive in his arms.

"What right have I to make you a victim of my mad sense of duty, my crazy conscience! I have no wife but you, God knows—"

"Peter! Don't!" she whispered, as vibrant as he. "You mustn't; you're breaking faith—your own, mine—"

## Chapter Twenty-two

JOSIE entered the room at the open door from outside and stood upon the threshold. Behind her bristled the brown walruslike mustache on the swarthy, foolish face of the mighty rabbit-hunter Harvey Wilson, proprietor of the Red Bridge hotel. There was another man in the shadows that Peter didn't know. How long they had been in the vicinity was not revealed, and only when Josie spoke was Peter aware of her, a thin figure in brown, her face white as chalk under the rouge. But she had her most audacious air as she spoke.

"I guess I planned this visit just about right," she said with a dry laugh. "Injured wife comes upon guilty pair in each other's arms."

She turned to her companions, who stood grinning at a situation which was to provide the Red Lion with gossip for weeks to come. "Well, gentlemen," said Josie with a businesslike air to her companions, "you saw them, didn't you? This is Sadie Keith that's trying to get my husband away from me—alienation of affections is what they call it. I just want you to look at her carefully so that you can identify her when I ask you to."

The full meaning of this visit, and the purposes behind it, only came to Peter and Tommy through Josie's spoken words.

"Send those men out of here," Peter said quietly to Josie. "If you don't, I'll throw them out."

He took a pace forward, but Josie intervened.

"I guess you'd better go, Harvey," she said nervously. "I've got something I want to say. Go up the lane and sit in the flivver. I'll be going back to the hotel presently."

Wilson glanced at Peter, leered at Tommy, pulled at his heavy mustache and followed the other man out. Peter slammed the door and turned to his wife.

"Well," he said angrily, "what's the meaning of this?"

Josie crossed the room to the fireplace and put her handbag on the mantel—a significant motion, an assertion of her rights in this house. Then she turned and faced Peter and Tommy.

"The meaning? As if you didn't know! I came down here to get the evidence I've been waiting for for months. And I

guess I've got it." She laughed unpleasantly at Tommy, who stood at one side, completely at a loss in the situation. "I suppose *she* thought she could sneak down here as soon as she got back from the West, without my knowing anything about it. Well, I was prepared for that. I've got a few friends in Red Bridge to look after my interests. . . . I suppose you've got something to say?"

SHE spoke jerkily, her words unduly accented. She was thinner than ever, and gave the impression that all the energy remaining in her frail body was concentrated upon her resentment.

Peter stared at her. He had reached the limit of his tolerance, but he had to admit that she had a commanding position. And there was Tommy to think of.

"See here, Josie, you—ah—you've gone too far—with this wild talk—coming down like this—bringing these fellows in here. I've come to the end of my patience. I want you to understand you can't make statements reflecting on Miss Keith—"

"I can't? Well, you just listen, then—"

"I forbid you." Peter strode forward as Tommy spoke.

"One moment, Peter," she said coolly as he paused. "Let her speak. I don't mind."

"Well, I'm going to speak whether she wants me to or not. You might think from the way you treat me that I had no rights in this house and that you two could keep up this game down here the way you did it in New York. Well, it can't be done. I knew I'd get my chance if I waited long enough, and it's come now. There isn't a court in New Jersey or anywhere else that wouldn't see my side of this case with the witnesses I've got. You wanted my husband, Sadie Keith, and you've done everything you could to break up our home. You got his love away from me, so that he treated me badly and I had to go away from Red Bridge. But even that didn't satisfy you. You had to keep after him when he was trying his best to do what was right. That's true. I haven't anything against *him*. It's *you* I'm after, and I guess you'll see, when this thing comes out, that you'll have to pay for the fun you've had at my expense." She had a sharp fit of nervous coughing, but went on, her physical difficulties mastered by the urgency of her purpose:

"I gave you your chance. I wanted to be reasonable when I saw the way things were going. I made you a good offer to give my husband a divorce—"

"Tommy!" said Peter, aghast.

"I didn't tell you, Peter. She wanted—"

"Twenty thousand dollars—that's all. You could have been married to her by this time—"

"She dared do that!" Peter gasped.

Josie gave a laugh. "Well, she hadn't sense enough to see it. Instead she treated me as if I'd come to steal her jewelry instead of doing her a favor. Sent me out of her apartment as if I'd been a servant."

All of Josie's small frame seemed to grow compact with rage as she turned to Tommy.

"You've been lording it over people for a long time, Sadie Keith, with your fine airs, and your money; but you'll be glad to come to me for mercy before this thing is over with. And you won't get out of it for any twenty thousand dollars—for five times that, either. I'll show you that you can't trample me under your feet. I'll give your swell friends at the Ritz something to read about in the newspapers. I'll let people know you for what you are—"

PETER had reached her side and caught her by the elbows with an effort to head off the wild torrent of invective, but she wrenched away from him, laughing hysterically.

"Maybe you think I don't know where I stand in this affair. Well, I do know. With the evidence I've got of what's going on between you two, I'll make her pay what I please."

She took a pace toward Tommy, exhausting her last drop of venom.

"And you—I'm going to make you wish you'd never been born, before you'd treated me the way you have. I've hated you from the beginning, and I hate you now. You—you—"

Her utterance choked her, and she stumbled backward, one hand at her throat. There was a sudden frightened look in her eyes. As Peter came forward, she sank into a chair in a struggle for breath, between paroxysms of coughing. One hand made a gesture toward the mantel as she tried to speak.

"My bag! Medicine!" she managed to gasp. Peter brought it to her. She fumbled at the bag and found the small bottle with which Peter was already familiar. (Continued on page 136)

"You're only a child!" he yelled. "Next you'll be chasin' young upstarts an' thinkin' you're old enough to marry an' leave me."



# Laugh That Off!

By

Illustrated by J. Allen St. John

Harold Titus

This magazine was the first of America's greater periodicals to publish very short stories. The practice is general now, but Red Book Magazine "very shorts" continue to win the prize of public praise. Here, then, is another by a writer who, in his home on Lake Michigan, has only recently made use of the form. You'll read his story in five minutes, but you'll remember it five years.

NOBODY in town liked Baxter, anyhow, and we were all glad when it happened. It certainly was a wallop for him, and he deserved one; and of course everybody likes excitement of that sort. We were glad for Ruth, too.

He was too cold-blooded a fish to have such a daughter as Ruth, anyway. If she had been spunky or disagreeable herself, it would have been different, but she was young and frail, and ever since her mother died, she had been old Baxter's drudge. She not only kept his house but worked in his office, where he squeezed poor farmers who were unlucky enough to have to borrow money from him. The other girls said that Ruth had never been to a party in her life and had only one dress a year and made that herself. It was a case of all work and no fun, as far as she was concerned.

Worse than that, old Baxter used to abuse her before people. It made no difference what she'd done or who was around; he seemed to like to humiliate her just to show others what a hard-boiled old egg he was. But it wasn't necessary; everybody knew him for what he was.

Every morning about eight we'd see Ruth hurrying downtown to open up the old man's office; at eleven she'd go home to get the dinner; and never later than half-past twelve she'd be back at her machine and stay till after five. Like that, day after day. Nobody ever saw her evenings.

**RUTH'S** appearance was remarkable for but one thing. Her face was white, with only a little stain of pink high up on her cheeks, and her eyes were large and blue; she was slender—sort of half-fed-looking—and medium tall. But she had the reddest and the heaviest hair you've ever seen in your life. Honestly, it was so red and heavy it looked like spun copper and hung in a great thick braid down her back, like a metal cable.

She did it up only once. Bud Holliday—he's the sheriff of our county—went to the office early one morning to get some attachments old Baxter had fixed up. Baxter hadn't come down yet, and Ruth was just turning away from the mirror over the washstand in the corner. She'd done up her hair, and she seemed rather embarrassed at being caught.

The sheriff started to josh her a little—he's always joshing; and just then Baxter came in. What he said to Ruth was a plenty. He seemed to go crazy.

"You're only a child!" he yelled in a voice that would carry a block. "A child, tryin' to act grown up! Next you'll be chasin' young upstarts an' thinkin' you're old enough to marry an' leave me, who's slaved for you for years! Take it down!"

Ruth was all broken up, and Bud tried to make it easier but only made it worse. Baxter had his way, and Ruth kept right on being a little girl until she was twenty—that copper rope of hair hanging down her back and she shy and quiet and without any friends same as always. She kept away from girls because she could never do what girls like to do, and boys kept away from her

because she was so plain or maybe because they were afraid of Baxter.

Baxter used to buy a bond now and then, and a young bond salesman who came to our town two or three times a year always called on him. One day Baxter went into his office and found this man visiting with Ruth. The girl was blushing and confused, and the old man wanted to know what was up. Now, this young fellow was all man, and when he saw Baxter give Ruth that dirty look, he went to her rescue, or thought he did.

"I was just complimenting your daughter on her hair," he said. "I was saying some day some man would go clear off his head about it. That's lovely hair, Mr. Baxter, and she ought to be proud of it."

The old man only grunted and then said he didn't want any bonds and there wasn't any use of the young fellow hanging around any longer. The salesman went out, but he waited in the hall because he sort of expected something might happen.

"Hair, eh?" he heard Baxter sneer. "So young gaffers think your hair's purty! It'll make some of 'em crazy about you, will it? Come here! I'll show 'em! I'll learn you to let young gaffers tell you that kind of stuff!"

The door was open a ways, and the bond man saw old Baxter grab up a big pair of desk shears. He got the girl by the wrist, and she yelled good and loud. The young fellow jumped back into the room, but he was too late. Baxter had snipped that great bronze braid off close to Ruth's neck and stood waving it around, so mad he couldn't speak. He got a piece of another man's mind, you bet, but that wasn't any help to Ruth, who was about crazy with scare and shame.

Well, of course, even Baxter couldn't have his daughter going around with her hair haggled that way, so he gave her a half-dollar to go to the Gem Barber Shop and

have Looie straighten it up. And that's where the surprise came in.

You know, bobbed hair works queer changes in girls' looks, but nobody ever knew what a real change was until they saw Ruth. Her hair had been wavy, but there'd been such a heft of it that the wave, so to speak, never had had a chance. Now, with it bobbed short, it clung around her ears in the trickiest sort of half-curls. It framed her face, sort of, and brought out color and lines nobody'd ever seen before, and when she pulled her old felt hat away down over it folks didn't know her! She looked like a mixture of the prettiest flappers you see in the movies, and an angel. That sounds like a funny mixture, but there wasn't anything funny about Ruth Baxter's looks—then.

**WELL**, sir, in no time at all she had all the young fellows in town clear off their heads. Rolly Wilcox, for instance, who'd gone to school with her and who'd never looked twice at her before, forgot all about cashing in at the bank. He went around goggle-eyed for a week and then went around fighting mad. This last was because old Baxter threatened him with a gun.

But that didn't stop Rolly. Not much. It wouldn't have stopped any decent fellow with nerve when Ruth was on the far side of that gun. He took her right out of the old man's office one noon and slammed the door in Baxter's face and plumped Ruth into the front seat of his auto and whizzed down to the courthouse and over to Reverend Parker's.

He's got the prettiest wife our town's ever seen, and the happiest too. They say that after Baxter'd eaten humble pie a spell, and promised to be good if they'd recognize him as an in-law, he went back to the office and poked the blades of those shears in a crack and busted them all to smithereens. But my wife says he wont be entirely human till he's a grandfather.

## MATED

(Continued from page 79)

after-nibbling a sandwich. "We thought it might be better to come and have a talk."

"I'm not the sort that runs away from things," said Mrs. Weaver, her pop eyes beligerent. "I believe in meeting the issues face to face. Only last week I paid my attorneys five thousand dollars to—"

"Never mind that," broke in Weaver soothingly.

"Why shouldn't I mind that?" demanded his wife.

"Nobody can say I'm not kind and considerate," Mrs. Weaver went on. "I give more than my share to charity, if I do say it who shouldn't. Why, the little tots at the Good Shepherd Orphanage all know me by name. This spring at their festival I decorated the building, entirely at my own expense."

This was undeniable, apparently, but it did little toward advancing the business at hand.

"I thought Lucinda might come to you a little early this year, if you didn't mind," ventured Mrs. Shelby, and the sugar-tongs trembled in her hand.

"That's just why we've come to see you," declared Mrs. Weaver. "We don't care to have Lucinda with us again."

**THIS** was an unexpected turn. The prisoner, prepared for her term, was rejected by her jailers. Lucinda looked blankly across at her father, and read uninviting coldness in his eyes.

"But I don't understand—" began Matala. Her face had colored; her long-repressed temper was beginning to show.

"We can't have her—I'm sorry," per-

sisted Mrs. Weaver, toning her voice to a smoother pitch. "We've closed the house for the summer, and we'll be entertaining this fall."

"I think you've forgotten," said Matala, bridling, "that I have a perfectly lawful right to ask this."

"You'd have to prove that," smiled Weaver.

"And it would be very expensive," added his wife.

"At least I have a right," said Matala, and her voice was cold as steel, "to ask you, Fairchild, to contribute to your daughter's support."

"Have you?" His handsome brows went up, and he never lost his tolerant smile. "If you'll consult a lawyer, you'll find you're wrong. You waived all claims on me when you married again."

"And since we are talking candidly,"—Mrs. Weaver had resumed her society voice with its slight English accent,—"let me tell you why your daughter is an unsuitable guest in our house. Nobody on earth could have been kinder to her than I was during her visit. I showed her every possible consideration. Her stay cost me over thirty-five hundred dollars, including the decoration of her rooms, her garden party, her clothes, and the detective we had to employ when she ran away. Not that I begrudge the money. We can afford to do some things which others, less favored by Fortune, can't do. All I ask is gratitude. I make it a rule never to employ any servants who aren't grateful for what I do." Lucinda recalled Mademoiselle and the successive butlers. "All the time she was in my house,

Lucinda showed a spirit of unfriendly criticism which was very distressing to me and to her father and to Eddie."

"She's a bum," chipped in Eddie, who had emptied his bananas and was hanging their skins over a vacant chair.

"Possibly it's because she hasn't had the proper advantages," resumed Mrs. Weaver smoothly. "She shows signs of repression. It is very bad for children, repression. I have always been a great believer in self-expression for the flowering character. Since he was a baby I have encouraged my Eddie to develop his natural traits, only seeking to mold him here and there." She was exceedingly pompous, and Lucinda looked at her mother, dreading an outburst. But Orla Weaver was permitted to go on. "And I noticed a tendency on Lucinda's part to sulk and prowl. She was never open with me, in spite of all I did. She showed no gratitude. And she was constantly quarreling with my Eddie. Eddie is very quick to sense unfriendliness. But he can always be reasoned with. I was annoyed more than once by the way your daughter flew at him. And—I think Lucinda remembers this—I gave her a garden party. It cost me eleven hundred and fifty dollars. You would have thought, after all I have done for her—"

"It isn't true!" Lucinda said this in the spirit of an innocent captive, condemned without counsel.

"You see?" asked Mrs. Weaver, turning bland eyes toward Matala. "I should have so liked to do something for her. But she is very difficult, Mrs. Shelby. Very."

"I'm glad you've told me this," said



# Vegetable Soup

## Serve it as the one hot dish of the meal!

At this time of year when meals are so largely made up of cold meats and salads, the serving of invigorating soup as the one hot dish is especially beneficial and welcome.

See how eagerly you relish Campbell's Vegetable Soup, with its vegetables, cereals, beef broth, herbs and seasoning. Thirty-two ingredients—almost a meal in itself! So delicious to taste—so easy to prepare!

21 kinds  
12 cents a can



Campbell's Kids on their vacation  
Filled with glee and high elation—  
Known and loved throughout the nation,  
Thanks to Campbell's reputation!

Matalea, her first speech in the long discourse.

"I wanted to tell you before—"

"Yes—before I made the mistake of sending her again to such people."

"I don't understand you," snapped Mrs. Weaver. Her husband looked nervously at his watch. "After all I did for her! And in all that time I never asked a favor of her, except to shake up a few drinks when my guests were in my house—"

"If we don't go now," broke in Weaver, "we'll never make it. Here, waiter. Check."

But before the check came to him, Matalea had seized it and signed it. It was a gesture of pride which heartened Lucinda's wavering esteem for her mother. And when they were gone—Eddie having paused to place a banana skin on the carpet outside the dining-room door—Lucinda reached for her mother's hand. It was cold and unyielding as ice.

### Chapter Fifteen

LUCINDA had never been so close to her mother as on that afternoon. Like soldiers of two opposing armies, thrown together by some odd misfortune of war, they clung to each other, sharing a common woe. But as months wore on, they were parted again, spiritually, each going the way of her own dream.

Matalea gave up her suite, and Lucinda saw their luggage going down to the sixth floor and into a large bedroom with a bath; at first it had seemed badly cluttered with trunks, suitcases, hat-boxes and unopened parcels. Their subsequent move to the seventh floor had been decidedly for the worse. Here it was so narrow that many pieces must be sent down to the storeroom. There was a public bathroom halfway down the corridor. Since Mrs. Shelby was continually clamoring for a porter, sending trunks in, sending trunks out, the little room took on the appearance of a warehouse.

Mrs. Shelby, who never more than once admitted the possibility of defeat, referred lightly to their condition as "camping out." And if camping it were, it was on the trail of one who seldom came into the open. Matalea Shelby had divorced her husband in the fall, to follow a man who had promised to be rid of his wife at once and marry again in haste. In the summer of the second year thereafter he was still at large. His case had been complicated by Pennsylvania's State laws. Meanwhile Matalea looked wistfully for the mails that would bring Ike's alimony. When it came, she invariably complained that it was too small. Her resentment toward her late husband was the only ill temper she showed. She had a determined look, and abstracted, but freedom from matrimony seemed to have had a soothing effect on her disposition.

"Well, he's got his way. He's gone on the stage. Now we'll all starve." Matalea said this one morning, opening letters. By her tone of scorn and impatience, Lucinda knew that she was talking of Daddy; but her information was not news to Lucinda, who had received frequent letters with strange postmarks—Omaha, Detroit, Atlanta, Birmingham—letters full of affection and quaint observations on life back of the curtain. His words sparkled. He was happy. Then he would drop in a wistful sentence to let her know of an untenanted corner in his heart, of a loneliness his incoherence could never express; she could see him sitting on their favorite rock, his old brown hat jammed over his eyes to shadow his proud, hurt look. But Daddy had got his heart's desire. Ben Irish had put him in a road company, playing in "Wisteria," a vivid melodrama. "I'm a remarkably reeking, soggy villain," he wrote, "and I'm getting twice as many hisses as the man who

just stepped out of the part. Mrs. Fitzhugh is carrying away most of the roses in our company. And what do you think I call myself, for a stage name? Ashton Brock. Can you penetrate the disguise?"

Because Lucinda was becoming attuned to matrimonial shifts, she caught herself wishing that Daddy would marry Minnie Fitzhugh. She wanted to see him happy with the lovely, gracious creature who seemed to look on life with the eyes of a kindly goddess. But that dream was not for long. It aroused a new cynicism within her, causing her to ask if Daddy would be happy, even with Minnie Fitzhugh. There was something flowerlike about love; then people got married. And what happened to them? How would *Romeo* and *Juliet* have prospered, had their course run smoothly after an obliging friar had tied the knot?

Mother was undoubtedly a more contented woman, living unmarried—and this in spite of her precarious existence and involved program. Nothing, of course, could have breathed serenity into her, because her ambitions, like all false ambitions, were gadding things. Outwardly her life was frivolous in the extreme; only Lucinda saw the whole of its seamy side—the woman who made the beds, the bellboy who answered her mother's many calls, merely glimpsed it.

Out of her alimony Matalea could pay for her room, her taxicabs, a few meals a week and—by keeping scientifically in arrears—mollify her dressmakers and milliners. Three or four nights a week she dined well at somebody else's expense. Because the divorce story had followed her north, she made small progress with the more fiercely conservative Skeltons and Shelbys. But to the younger generation this made no difference. Mrs. Shelby was chic; she was a good sportswoman; she wore her clothes distinctively; she was a lady born. Poverty, of course, was the principal barrier to her success.

She got around this, not always gracefully, by one makeshift or another. A fair horsewoman, she rode occasionally in the Park, choosing spectacular hours. She made the most of her charming little face, her few jewels, her air of breeding, her talent for dress. When Lucinda saw her of an evening, greenish drops in her ears, her tawny hair lustrous, her complexion made brilliant, her sherry-colored eyes bright with excitement, her slim arms springing smoothly perfect from a silver bodice, she would have sworn that her mother was still young, still happy and very rich. Only in her neck a whipcord line which would not be smoothed out, kneaded out, pressed out, indicated that Time was getting her by the throat, and she could not play on forever.

DURING this phase of her life Matalea talked more candidly with her daughter than ever before or afterward. She was being entertained everywhere, she said, but she had nothing with which to repay her social debts. Their income was squandered long before Alimony Day. Matalea had people in to tea, the pauper's form of entertainment. She gave two small dinners during the season. Mother's green earrings had disappeared early, and then the sapphire ring of which she was so proud. She said she had lost them.

When Matalea had no invitation to dinner, she sent Lucinda out with a handbag to a delicatessen shop. She returned with cream cheese, crackers, a package of tea, the tiniest possible cubes of butter, and occasionally a little sliced chicken. The Shelbys invested in a percolator and an electric flatiron. They breakfasted on what was left from dinner, and not infrequently lunched on the remainders of breakfast, plus a can of sardines or a bag of potato chips. Lucinda became expert at brushing away

crumbs, hiding the evidences of their picnicking before the chambermaid should appear and stare with a look of sinister knowledge.

When Matalea had no obliging automobile offered to take her to Radnor for the horses, or the Cricket Club for tennis, she would hire a motor and go rolling out with Lucinda, both dressed brilliantly for the occasion, which meant more laundry, and lighter meals in their room. At one of these shows Ezra Nash had asked her to ride a sorrel thoroughbred, entered in the jumping class. Standing on the lawn with Mr. Bernard Skelton's party, Lucinda had thrilled at the praise of Mrs. Shelby's pretty form as she rode smartly astride and took the hurdles without so much as fluttering the top bar. "What a beautiful seat!" cried Mrs. Leigh, who had hitherto regarded the Shelbys with eyes of suspicion. "She comes from the Blue Grass," chuckled Mr. Skelton, just as though he felt some ownership in her.

COLONEL PELIG HARBISON had a right to be there, prominently featured, both as a horseman and a director of the Club. Moreover he had come down from New York to serve with the judges. A thin, stiff, erect old man in a pin-check suit, pearl gray derby, crimson necktie and yellow gloves, Lucinda saw him at a distance, stalking among the riders, lifting his hat punctiliously whenever a lady vaulted into the saddle. He was a man of importance in the show. But what of the other old man, strutting with a haggard, rather violently dressed woman up and down the lawn? He was a tremendously oversized old man, figured like a heroic statue constructed of some perishable material and allowed to brown and dirty and melt in the sun. Up and down he lumbered with the flaming woman, who smoked cigarettes and ogled him self-consciously.

Unfriendly eyes were on him as he passed. In the group where Lucinda stood, waiting for her mother, she could hear people talking about the two old men: "Colonel T. G. B. Fair! Who in the world brought him here?" . . . "He came with Pelig Harbison. I suppose Pelig had to listen to his master's voice." . . . "And with that woman! Has old Pelig gone crazy?" "He's gone about the limit, heaven knows—but bringing Colonel Fair!"

Isolated on the lawn stood the big, untidy man and his companion; she never ceased to talk or he to smile pleasantly, suavely. Lucinda turned her eyes with the crowd. Matalea was riding again. This time she took the hurdles like a swallow, and the lawn crackled with polite enthusiasm. Colonel Harbison himself pinned a red ribbon on her borrowed horse.

"What a pity Mother's never had the things she's wanted!" thought Lucinda. "Houses and horses and people—the right sort of people—to praise her and take care of her. She's so different today. She comes out like a flower. Daddy couldn't give her what she wanted. He worked his poor fingers to the bone, but he couldn't."

Colonel Pelig Harbison helped her dismount and escorted her back to the lawn. Matalea's air was animated, flirtatious; his brusquely amorous. As they came closer, Lucinda took a keenly curious look at his old face; under a toothbrush mustache his mouth twisted wryly to a smile; his nose was big and wide-nostrilled like a horse's; he had little, sly, sagacious eyes—not a nice old man at all. He presented a withered mask above a body which seemed to hold together by dint of will power and physical exercise. Lucinda suspected that he had false teeth.

"Well, Colonel Harbison," Mr. Skelton was saying heartily, "Ezra never had a horse managed like that before."



*At the Ritz-Carlton  
and the Ambassador  
in Atlantic City*

**One Hundred and Sixty-Four Women Guests  
tell why they prefer this soap for their skin**

*More than three-fourths of the women guests interviewed at the Ritz and the Ambassador find Woodbury's the best soap for their skin.*

**I**T is to Atlantic City, with its golden air and its wonderful hotels that society women from New York, Philadelphia, Washington—even from as far as Pittsburgh and Chicago—go for a week-end of delicious idleness, when the rush of a crowded season has begun to wear on their vitality.

Because the brilliant throngs that drift through the Ritz and the Ambassador represent as cosmopolitan a gathering as America can offer—we undertook an investigation among the women guests at these two hotels. How do these women, who can afford the most costly personal luxuries, take care of their skin? What soap do they buy? Why do they choose it?

**Their reasons, in their own words**

One hundred and ninety-four women guests staying at the hotels at the time of our inquiry answered our questions.

One hundred and sixty-four, or more than three-fourths, said they were using Woodbury's Facial Soap for their skin.

We asked the one hundred and sixty-four Woodbury users why they preferred it for the care of their skin.

*"Because my skin was so irritated by any ordinary soap."*

*"Because other soaps which I had given a fair trial had failed—Woodbury's has greatly helped me."*

*"Because of the amount of soap necessary to use, living in Pittsburgh. I find Woodbury's leaves the skin as smooth as possible."*

*"Because once I find something good, I want to hold on to it. It is the most refreshing soap in the world."*

*"Because all my friends who have good complexions use it."*

These were a few of the answers.

One hundred and twenty-two women spoke of the purity of Woodbury's or of its mild, non-irritating effect on a tender skin.

A skin specialist worked out the formula by which Woodbury's is made. This for-

mula not only calls for absolutely pure ingredients. It also demands greater refinement in the manufacturing process than is commercially possible with ordinary toilet soap. In merely handling a cake of Woodbury's one notices this extreme fineness.

Around each cake of Woodbury's Facial Soap is wrapped a booklet containing special cleansing treatments for overcoming common skin defects. Get a cake of Woodbury's today, at any drug store or toilet goods counter, and begin your treatment tonight!

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"He's perfectly delightful to ride," beamed Mother, her face lovely, red as a peony under her flat-brimmed bowler.

"All he ever needed was a rider," growled Colonel Harbison. "And a precious few of those you'll find around this neck o' the woods. Who wants a drink? Come on, everybody. It's hot as mustard out here."

As they were moving toward the clubhouse, Lucinda was fished out of the mob and introduced.

"Your daughter?" puffed Colonel Harbison, blowing hard out of his huge, large-nostriled nose. "Don't tell me that, little woman. She's your sister. She can't fool us, can she?" he cackled, poking Lucinda with one of his yellow buckskin thumbs. "Lady that looks like that and rides like that can't have a great big grown-up daughter."

"She was married very young," explained Lucinda's treble.

"Haw-haw!" grated Colonel Harbison. "That's what they all say."

No, Lucinda didn't like Colonel Harbison. Nor did her heart warm toward him when, a little later, she heard Mrs. Leigh asking Mrs. Brand: "Why do we endure him?"

"Well, we always have," said Mrs. Brand.

"I suppose so," said Mrs. Leigh, "but he's getting too old to ride. Some day he'll kill himself. And all that horrid talk in the papers—the Lulu Vesey case, and Mrs. Turner."

His bringing Colonel Fair and that woman won't make things any better," said Mrs. Brand.

### Chapter Sixteen

YES, Lucinda had dreams quite different from her mother's. Loosely schooled, much neglected, she had grown into a queer hodgepodge of shrewd practicality and wild romance. From the public library she borrowed books with shabby covers and steeped her tender mind in novels with satisfactory heroes and nice endings. She preferred the tales of Mr. Harrison, of Mr. Locke and of Mr. Hewlett. A young, tall, shaggy man with a broad hat and flowing tie would shamle through the lobby—*Jack Senhouse*, poet, socialist, nature-lover, had quit the Valley of Pan to visit Philadelphia, possibly to cash a check or renew his life-insurance. A modest little fellow, shy of glance, his dress proclaiming the aristocrat, would pause diffidently near a page-boy, asking his way—*Simple Septimus*, out of the pages of Mr. Locke. She cared nothing for Mr. Wells or Mr. Swinnerton; possibly it was fortunate, at her age. Taking no in-

terest in kitchen-loves, she doted on the thought of beauty in rags or in circus clothes, of golden hearts shimmering under outlandish waistcoats.

How was he coming to her, the man who was growing in her imagination as surely as her body's growth? Her heroes were sweet phantoms, smiling or frowning bravely out of books. She had met none in life; there was only the boy with the broken eyebrow who had fed her sausages, nearly three years before, in the Grand Central lunch-room. There had been something of *Senhouse* and of *Septimus* about him. That morning had been a touch of adventure, just a sniff of its intoxication.

But Lucinda was a lonely child, growing toward danger, instinct with sentiment and curiosity.

One afternoon a young man with a slouch hat and handsome eyes sat in the chair next to hers and began to read the sporting edition of an evening paper. His air was uncertain, ill at ease. Studying his thin, scholarly face, she concluded that he was there on an errand of great delicacy, that he was in trouble and needed help. Now and then he would pause in his reading and make notes with a fountain pen; his fingers were slender, the nails long and white. He must have guessed that she was looking at him, for he glanced up suddenly and smiled. She was sorry that his teeth were so brown.

"Nice day for a ride, sister," he began, and her rosy vision faded to drab.

"Yes, it is," she informed him, civilly enough.

"Well, what do you say?"

What she would have said was unrevealed, for Miss Owsley, in a very short skirt and shimmering turban, came up just then and beckoned her away. There was a look in her hazel eyes which made her seem a hundred years old as she took the young girl by the arm and led her toward the door.

"What did he want?" she asked sharply.

"He—he said it was a nice day for a ride—and I said it was," explained Lucinda with a nervous giggle.

"You'd better not do that any more," said Miss Owsley, and there was a certain sharpness in her tone.

"But he looked so nice," Lucinda weakly defended herself.

"Well, he isn't," declared Miss Owsley as she thrust her young friend into a taxicab and ordered the man to drive to a department store.

THIS had become a habit with Miss Owsley; she would come upon Lucinda unceremoniously, whisk her away on a shopping expedition, buy her soda water at a marble counter, then, as if tired of her pretty toy, drop her at some crowded corner and let her walk home. This afternoon it was a pleasure to watch Miss Owsley, daintily plucking at the luxuries she adored. With thin hands, so manicured that the nails looked like tinted, highly polished shells, she would pass strands of lace between thumb and finger, rub it, appraise it with knowing eyes.

She had an acquaintance, it seemed, with every shopgirl in town. They gave her more than her share of time and gossiped with the air of confederates.

After she had cruised from silken port to silken port, deciding here that she couldn't wear silver slippers with that peculiar toe, and there that she adored the gray stockings and would take a dozen pairs, charge them, please, she took Lucinda to a confectioner's and plied her with nut-sundaes. Herself, she ordered orange juice without sugar.

"At your age," sighed Miss Owsley, "you can eat anything. I have to think of my figure. Isn't it a bore?"

"You have a lovely figure," declared Lucinda, raised in the skin-and-bone school. Miss Owsley's body was lithe as a monkey's,

and much care had softened the angles; only her face looked a little haggard.

"You must begin at seventeen," said Miss Owsley, sipping her drink through straight, slightly carmined lips. "You mustn't let fat gain on you."

"I won't," promised Lucinda over an especially large spoonful of mixed ices. How she admired Miss Owsley! Her voice was pretty, tinkling, cautious; her gestures graceful. What made the girl think that her mother wouldn't approve? Miss Owsley wasn't, certainly, like the Butler children, who had talked through their noses and let her jump on the beds. She was distinguished, and Lucinda had found her all by herself!

WHAT Miss Owsley didn't know, as Juba would have said, wasn't in the dictionary. She knew how Bob Wooster had been dropped from the tennis club for throwing a plate at Phil Arnsdale; she knew, moreover, why the plate had been thrown. The reasons were too complicated for Lucinda's freshman brain. She knew why the Duke of Melbruck had left town suddenly without proposing to Dorothy Saylor. Lucinda felt immeasurably grown up to sit there, listening to these vital tales, torn from the pages of real life. . . . To refresh her memory, Miss Owsley bought a copy of *On Dit* on each day of publication.

Finally she got around to Colonel Harbison and Colonel Fair, and the young girl tilted her ear.

"My dear," said Miss Owsley with a look that would have been wicked had it not been so eminently discreet, "there's been a delightful row at Radnor. Colonel Pelig Harbison brought Colonel Fair to the horse show, and now they've requested him to resign."

"I know," said Lucinda, proud to understand something of Miss Owsley's tattle. "I saw them there."

"Wasn't it dreadful!" chirped Miss Owsley, as though Lucinda were grown and of the world. "Nobody'd think anybody would dare bring that dreadful old man anywhere—and with Sarah Coy!"

"What's the matter with them?" asked Lucinda.

"Everything. Why, she's been named as co-respondent, and he isn't divorced yet—I mean *this* divorce. He's had so many, not to mention breach-of-promise cases and horsewhippings and bribery charges. He's dreadfully exciting and wicked. Haven't you even heard of him? No? Well, I suppose old Pelig Harbison had to bring him if he wanted to come. You see, they call old Pelig, Colonel Fair's *Man Friday*. He pulls all the hot chestnuts out of the fire, manages the Fair lawsuits, does all the dirty work. It's made him very wealthy—Colonel Fair, you know, is *e-nor-mously* rich. And a squire of dames! You wouldn't think it, looking at his grimy clothes. But you never can tell." This with a wise glance.

"He and Colonel Harbison seem to be very good friends," said Lucinda between mouthfuls of ice cream.

"They have to be. Colonel Harbison depends on Colonel Fair for his bread and butter. But it's awfully expensive bread and butter. The Harbisons, you know, are a very prominent Baltimore family. Pelig has always been the black sheep. He's become a perfect old rowdy."

"I don't like him," declared Lucinda.

"Why should you?" She laughed her silvery, tittering laugh. "Jack Milligan once said that Colonel Harbison borrows his manners from the horses, and Percy Filley said he wouldn't have the Fair stables slandered. But you have to admire the Colonel. He's got the nerve of the devil. Riding at his age! When he gets on a horse, you can't tell whether it's the saddle or the Colonel creaking. And he has his troubles. It's Colonel Fair, and with Lulu Vesey and Mrs.

## GERALD BEAUMONT

That is a name to conjure with—the name of the most popular short-story writer in America today. If you read "Heaven Bent" in the present issue, you'll see why—and you'll be impatient to read the second part of the story in our September issue.

"The women of the younger set today simply must look fresh and lovely"

—GLORIA GOULD



GLORIA GOULD—now Mrs. Henry A. Bishop, Jr.—youngest daughter of the late George F. Gould, is a leader in the smart younger set of New York. She is distinguished by a dark gypsy-like beauty and a magnetic personality. Among the many obligations Mrs. Bishop acknowledges is the daily care of her lovely olive skin with Pond's Two Creams.



OUTH! Lovely, laughing, light-hearted youth! Skins as fresh, smooth and clear as the petals of flowers, firm as full, round fruit! Wherever you see them, the women of the gay younger set of Society—lunching at Pierre's, dining at the Ritz, sitting on the sun-swept sands of Bailey's Beach or dancing under the summer moon anywhere—always you note the unwearied beauty of their skin!

These younger women must be themselves in keeping with the hour! They must look as gay, as light-hearted as they feel. And indeed it's amazing how completely they succeed in keeping their skin immaculately groomed, exquisite in texture and in tone! It's the method they've found! Two cool, delicious creams as light as froth, fragrant with a perfume rare and costly, one for cleansing and rejuvenating the skin, the other for giving it an even, velvety finish, to protect it and to serve as a base for powder. Together these Creams supply the two fundamental needs of every normal skin and this is how Gloria Gould and other lovely young women of Society use them:—

First, they cleanse their delicate skins with Pond's Cold Cream. This they do every day! At night before retiring, but also after a long motor drive, hours on the beach or the links, or a dusty shopping tour in the city, they cover their faces generously with the cream, and their throats, arms and the V of their necks if they have been exposed. They let it stay on a few moments. With a soft cloth or tissue they take it all off—and all the dirt too which has lodged in the depths of the pores and which this delicate cream simply floats to the surface of the skin. They repeat the process. And finish by closing the pores with a dash of cold water or a light massage with a piece of ice.

Now, over their newly cleansed skin before they powder, and always before

they venture out, they smooth a delicate film of Pond's Vanishing Cream. Then they powder—and rouge—and are ready to go out. The delicate Vanishing Cream gives their skin a new evenness of finish, and holds their powder and rouge with miraculous smoothness. It prevents the pores from becoming clogged,



The Two Creams used by Society's younger women

protects the skin from the drying effects of exposure, prevents it from becoming lined and prematurely old, and keeps the hands beautifully white and soft.

If the skin is inclined to be dry, it needs a special nightly cleansing with Pond's Cold Cream and a little of the cream should be left on until morning. If the skin is prone to oiliness it likewise needs an extra deep cleansing with Pond's Cold Cream. For this cream which adds needed oil to a dry skin also frees the pores of an oily skin from accumulations of excess oil.

And if the skin becomes burned or chapped the cooling touch of Pond's Cold Cream will quickly restore its velvet suppleness.

Pond's are the creams to which the lovely younger women of society have turned to perpetuate the beauty of their delicate skins.

And Gloria Gould is right when she says, "Fatigue and exposure can leave no trace on the skin that is cared for by Pond's Two Creams."

Aren't you just dying to try, for yourself, this delightful, effective method?

The Cold Cream comes in large jars and tubes and both creams in the smaller sizes of jars and tubes.

**FREE OFFER**—Mail this coupon and we will send you free tubes of these two creams and an attractive little folder telling you how to use them.

The Pond's Extract Company, Dept. H,  
133 Hudson St., New York.

Please send me your free tubes, one each of Pond's Cold and Vanishing Creams.

Name.....

Street.....

City.....State.....

Turner just in the background. But money talks. My word, *doesn't* it, though!"

Sitting there, wide-eyed, pink-checked, drinking in the scandal much as a child of six swallows tales of Santa Claus, Lucinda begged for more.

"Who are Lulu Vesey and Mrs. Turner?"

"You haven't heard of the Lulu Vesey breach-of-promise case? The papers were full of it. They used to have funny pictures every morning, showing Colonel Harbison with his big cigar, holding up his hand and saying: 'I'm not muscular enough to strike such a blow.' And of course Mrs. Turner showed up again with a threat to blackmail him."

Lucinda would have asked, "What is blackmail?" but Miss Owsley glanced hastily at her wrist-watch and declared that she was ten minutes late for an engagement. She left Lucinda at the corner and took a taxicab. But before the car had wheeled away from the curb, the girl heard her name called, and looking back, saw Miss Owsley beckoning her.

"Lucinda," she said, "you seem to have a lot of time on your hands."

"I do, sort of," admitted Lucinda, surprised.

"I should think you'd get something to do," tinkled Miss Owsley, and was gone.

How had she guessed what had been on Lucinda's mind since she had found her mother crying over a pile of bills?

### Chapter Seventeen

SOMETHING to do. Jumping wildly from the romantic to the practical, Lucinda began reading classified advertisements in the Philadelphia papers. Bushelmen were wanted, and buttonhole-makers and chorus girls, and a governess understanding French and willing to take full charge of three children during parents' absence in Europe. There was a call for basket-makers with experience, landscape gardener's assistant and well recommended chauffeurs. She hoped to find appeals for factory-girls, shopgirls, errand-girls—anything to suit her age and ignorance. She found one request for girls—age not stated—willing to start at three dollars a week, learning to sort shoddy. She knew that her mother would never consent to that. . . . Then the dream came back—herself, an ill-fed shoddy-sorter, living in a chummy little boarding-house, looking timorously across the table at fascinating, eccentric *Queed*, studying his wonderful inventions under the kerosene lamp.

Lacking the power to decide for herself, she went to the elevator and waited until the second one from the left came down with its passengers. When she got in, a knotty, middle-aged man in the hotel's uniform stood at the lever and greeted her with

melancholy politeness. As he started the machine up, he began his lamentation; if the weather kept on like this, half the town would be sun-struck in a week, and Philadelphia in summer was no place for a white man at all; as a boy, he'd traveled in India and laid in one of them British hospitals with a touch of sun and the thermometer boiling over the top, but you have to spend a summer in Philadelphia to know what real heat is. To the stranger Jerry Maone might have seemed unfriendly that morning, but Lucinda knew him, liked him and admired his oracular gifts.

"I suppose you'll be wanting to get off here," he suggested with a sigh, stopping the car at the seventh floor. He turned upon her a long, narrow face with a Spanish cast, reminiscent of the Armada's visit to Ireland.

"No, Jerry," objected Lucinda. "I'm going to ride with you."

His dark eyes glowed radiantly—glints of afternoon sun through a cathedral window. Jerry only smiled with his eyes, just as some gloomy, battered old church might smile with its windows. Again he started the elevator and continued with his views on the dark side of life. Running an elevator, you're no more than a black slave with a chain on you. A waiter's bad enough, but there's a future in it. You could be a head-waiter some day, and that's a fact. Then maybe you could own a hotel and drive around in a fat limousine.

"Why don't you be a waiter, Jerry?" she asked helpfully.

"Me leg," reported Jerry, sticking out a twisted calf. "I broke it once, and the doctor should of been sued."

"How did you break it?"

"Riding a bull."

There was an adventure, and Lucinda would have given what little she had to know about the bull and the leg. But a passenger got on at the eleventh floor, and Jerry fell into a brooding silence, his body professionally stiff, his white cotton glove busy with the lever. In Philadelphia the girl had made few acquaintances, and of them she liked Jerry best. Possibly she was the only guest in the hotel who rode with him for purely social reasons. She had discovered him as an individual one morning, a month before, when he had smuggled a box of fancy cakes into her hand with the explanation that a chambermaid had found them in a vacated room and he'd be fired if they (the management, presumably) caught him eating them. They might be poisoned, he added, but he didn't think so. He'd tried one an hour ago and didn't feel any worse than usual. Jerry, she knew, had watched her coming out of her room with her bag, bound for the delicatessen shop; and somehow she had faith in his loyalty.

Bit by bit she had pieced together his biography. He was one of a pair—twins, presumably—born in Avenue A, New York. The other one was named Tim, and they seldom met. His one grand adventure had come to him when he had shipped as a cabin-boy on a roving liner, plying between Oriental ports. He had come back with the conclusion that the East Side, as he defined the other half of the world, was slightly worse than the West Side. For a time he had been a roustabout on a Fall River boat. What fate had blown him to Philadelphia and a hotel elevator he never revealed.

Jerry was silent until he had let off his passenger and started up with her alone in the car. She had it on the point of her tongue to ask him about the bull and the broken leg, but he had thrust a cotton-gloved hand into his blouse and brought out a limp envelope roundly addressed with an indelible pencil.

"Me brother Tim, now," mourned Jerry,

"is headed straight for the rocks. He's a good boy, but reckless. Read that if you can."

She pulled out a ruled sheet and read in the same indelible writing:

*"Dear Bro I am at the Lace works doing pretty good & dont find anny fault with it here I am fourman in the shipping dept & think I can swing a big deal here becas the mangment is something awful. how much could you raise if I need mony as I am going to make a big deal. could you get a lay off few days & come to Saug point where I could tel you about this big deal and how it would go thrugh if I done it the mangment is something awful. Well I must close your Bro Tim."*

"Now, aint that like Tim?" Jerry asked, just as if Lucinda might judge.

"Why dont you go and see him?"

"And how'd I be going to see Tim?" he inquired morbidly. "Even if I had a lay-off, which is rare as a snake's hind leg, where'd I find carfare to Saug Point, which is two hours from New York in an auto and four in a Ford? And if I lost Tim to Philadelphia, how'd I feed him, do you suppose?"

Lucinda had no solution to offer; the question of food and lodging was to her an undecipherable puzzle. She had come to Jerry that morning in quest of help. She wanted to work. Yet what aid could he give her save to warn her away from the toiler's lot?

"I wonder," said she at last, "how you start in being a working-girl?"

Without turning his head, and out of a corner of his mouth, Jerry replied:

"And how could I tell, miss? I've been everything from a bee-farmer to a bridge-jumper, but never a working-girl. But this I know: there's nothing in taking wages in your hand from them that pays it. If I had me life to live over, I'd start in being a capitalist. What would you be doing in a factory, miss, or a mill, with your pretty hands all grease and shavings? You've got a room, haven't you? And three squares a day, haven't you?"

"Well, yes." This came dubiously. Three squares a day amounted to overstatement.

"Then stick it out," he advised.

"But, Jerry!" She was insistent. "Suppose I did have to work? Do you think I'd do well?"

"You would," he pronounced.

"And would your brother Tim take me in his shipping department or something?"

"He might, and do worse," said Jerry as he let her off at the ground floor.

JERRY had been diverting, as usual, but he got her nowhere in her program of self-support. It was not until the next afternoon that an opportunity presented itself.

That morning she woke with the moldy feeling peculiar to one who has slept in a laundry. Laundry indeed! There slept her mother, pillows drawn over her ears to shut out the healthy morning sounds. Three yards of clothesline stretched from the bureau to the curtain-pole,—it had been Lucinda's idea to smuggle in the clothesline,—and from it there hung a dozen or more articles of intimate apparel. Her first waking act was to feel if the clothes were dry; satisfied, she took them noiselessly down and poked them into a bureau drawer. The line she hid. The chambermaid might talk.

She had to remove five pairs of stockings from the basin before she could take her sponge-bath. It was dispiriting, but Lucinda had no valid grounds for objection. The idea had been hers. She had seen a miracle of saving in a few boxes of that soap-powder which you sift over soiled clothes, then soak and let nature take its course. Under the

### THOSE

### FAMOUS PETERS'

Their European adventures will begin in the next—the September—issue of this magazine. And besides that, what the implacable Mr. Peters does to his old home town of Dyke, Ohio, before he leaves, is—some.





"The advertisement said 'Fels-Naptha gives extra help'  
*"Extra help! That's only half the story!"*

Extra help that means a deeper, sweeter cleanliness!  
 Extra help that makes washday easier on yourself—  
 easier on your clothes!

What a joy to get bright, sparkling cleanliness in  
 clothes hardest to get clean! What a relief not to be  
 all tired out after the washing is done! What a satis-  
 faction to know your clothes are *safely* cleaned—whether  
 done by yourself or by someone else!

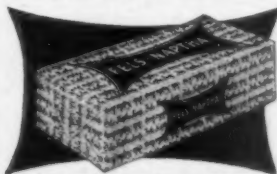
Only when you put Fels-Naptha to the test will  
 you fully realize how much its extra help means.

Splendid soap and dirt-loosening naptha—working  
 together—give Fels-Naptha this extra washing-help  
 you cannot get in any other form.

Isn't it worth a penny more a week to get this  
 extra help? It is cheaper in the end, anyway!

Millions of women know that nothing can take  
 the place of Fels-Naptha, and wouldn't be without it  
 for all their household cleaning. Why not get a bar  
 or two at your grocer's today, and put it to the test in  
 your home?

Are you boarding? Or living  
 in an apartment? Sometimes  
 you have hot water; sometimes  
 you don't. But Fels-Naptha is  
 always helpful for the little  
 daily washes—even with cool or  
 lukewarm water. It's remark-  
 able how much Fels-Naptha is  
 used for this purpose!



The original and genuine naptha soap  
 in the red-and-green wrapper. Buy  
 it in the convenient ten-bar carton.



Smell the naptha  
 in Fels-Naptha!

Use water of any tempera-  
 ture with Fels-Naptha. Boil  
 clothes with Fels-Naptha if  
 you prefer. You are bound to  
 get good results any way you  
 use it. The real naptha in  
 Fels-Naptha makes the dirt let  
 go, no matter whether the  
 water is cool, lukewarm or hot.  
 Be sure to include  
 Fels-Naptha in your camp kit  
 this Summer. It makes short  
 work of cleaning clothes and  
 dishes.

PROVE the extra help of Fels-Naptha. Send 2c in stamps for  
 sample bar. Address Fels-Naptha Soap, Philadelphia

# FELS-NAPTHA

THE GOLDEN BAR WITH THE CLEAN NAPTHA ODOR. © Fels & Co. Philadelphia

basin an electric flatiron lay neglected. It had worked so beautifully at first—Lucinda had learned to use it with the dexterity of another Juba Henry. Then something had gone off with a pyrotechnic flash, and the hopeful flatiron grew cold and dead. Lucinda, whose skin was as sensitive as her mother's, hated rough-dried underwear.

UNABLE to read, unable to think out her plan of life, unable to enjoy the passing throng, she sat that afternoon in an alcove of the main lobby, a book under her chin, her eyes vacant.

"All dressed up and no place to go!" said a charming voice at her ear. She looked up and saw that it was Miss Owsley. "My word, Lucinda! I should think you'd read your eyes out. Haven't you anything to do this afternoon?"

"I'm looking for work," declared Lucinda somewhat moodily as she laid down her book.

"Really?" Miss Owsley arched her delicately plucked brows, then took a chair beside her, opened her vanity-case, gazed with a professionally critical air, then looked appraisingly at the pretty girl before she said: "What do you think you can do, Lucinda?"

"I don't know," confessed Lucinda. "I've been reading advertisements in the papers, but all they want is bricklayers or carpenters, and girls with experience in flower-making."

"You couldn't do any of those," agreed Miss Owsley with one of her teasing, tinkling laughs. "But you really do want to earn a little pin-money, don't you?"

"I'd give anything if I could."

"Would you really stick to it and do what was asked of you without getting cross?"

"Oh, yes, Miss Owsley. I'd never get cross."

"Then I think,"—Miss Owsley paused here to study the possibilities,—"*I think I can find something for you.*"

"Oh, Miss Owsley!" This came in a gush of gratitude, but caution prompted the question, "What sort of work is it?"

"Well, it's helping a lady dress and arrange her clothes and tidy herself for the day."

"A sort of ladies' maid—"

"Not exactly—just being useful. Do you think your mother would object?"

"I—I suppose she would."

"It would only be two or three hours in the morning, and you could make a dollar a day."

Lucinda thought rapidly. A dollar a day would make seven dollars a week, if she worked Sundays. Her mother needn't know anything about it; she was seldom up before half-past eleven and was engaged with her own beautifying until one.

"Who's the lady?"

"I am," admitted Miss Owsley with one of her frail smiles. "I'd need you from half-past nine till half-past twelve. Do you think you could come?"

### Chapter Eighteen

LUCINDA'S work with Miss Owsley began, unsuspiciously, on a Friday, and ended, unceremoniously, on a Tuesday. That made ten days, including Sunday and excluding the Tuesday when her mother had insisted upon her going with her to a tennis-match at Haverford. The Colonel was taking them, and Mrs. Shelby had broadly hinted that it would improve appearances if Lucinda went along; so they put on their best—Matalea had found a new dressmaker with a gentle confidence in human nature—and together they rolled out the Montgomery Pike on the Main Line in Colonel Harbison's overpowering silver-mounted car.

Her outstanding memory of that day was

of the Colonel, who had a way of pressing her arm after the manner of a purchaser appraising a plump fowl. "Feed her up, and she'll knock their eyes out!" he would rasp in his rough old voice. But people deferred to Colonel Harbison, and in spite of herself Lucinda enjoyed seeing her poor mother sinking into his cushioned luxuries. He was a stop-gap in Matalea's ambitious program. He offered her the amusements of which she was being starved during the long wait for Ezra Nash.

Lucinda's intimate acceptance into Miss Owsley's apartment served to increase the mystery which surrounded that young woman. She occupied one of the handsomest suites in the hotel, on the eleventh floor. Her drawing-room was twenty feet across, finished with dark wood, in the Italian style, and suggested a private house rather than a hotel. Her bedroom, nearly as large, was set with French pieces, painted with little Dresden idyls. Her bathroom was a prodigy of smooth tiles with a tub you could almost swim in, Lucinda decided; there were any number of cabinets set in the wall and filled with confusing lotions. There was a nickel-plated weighing-apparatus, and a still more nickel-plated electrical device whose uses none could guess. A glistening compartment beyond showed a complicated needle-shower.

Lucinda concluded that Miss Owsley must be very rich—richer than the Weavers, maybe, and a hundred times nicer. She must be popular too, she thought, for there were photographs displayed in every corner of her room: pictures of army officers, naval officers, West Pointers, Annapolis middies, golfers and others in the ordinary clothes of polite society. Many of them were autographed, "*To Muriel.*" Muriel—what a pretty name! It was much sweeter than Miss Owsley, which Lucinda thought rather unromantic. One of the photographs showed Muriel sitting on a fence beside a stout gentleman in sporting tweeds. They were both laughing, and the scrawl below said, "*From Tags to Muriel—they was happy days.*"

Lucinda spent as much time as she could admiring Muriel's portrait gallery, but her three morning hours were busy ones, for Miss Owsley had many uses for her inexperienced assistant. She went at the beautifying of herself with a brisk thoroughness which made Mrs. Shelby's toilet-table dawdlings seem a little pathetic. When Lucinda woke her at nine-thirty,—Muriel had given her instructions and a latch-key,—the beauty would arise from her pillow, queerly disfigured in a complexion mask. She would sit up in her black georgette pajamas, and sip weak tea while her assistant drew a tepid bath, scented it lightly out of a jar of crystals, brought two or three lotions from a medicine cabinet and warmed towels.

After her thin tea and thinner biscuit, Miss Owsley's day began. With the hesitancy of a training prize-fighter, she would strip and commence contorting herself in a series of gymnastics. "This is for the torso," she would pant, extending her arms and twisting her slender waist to what seemed the breaking-point. "And this for the neck." Her head would pivot round and round, reminding Lucinda of a fabulous owl Daddy once recalled—which stood in the middle of a race-track and watched the horses until he wrung his own neck. Muriel had a set of tortures for the shoulders, the throat, the hips, the abdomen. Her exercises occupied exactly thirty minutes. Then she would jump onto the nickel-plated scales and groan because she had gained an ounce overnight.

During the exercises and the bath, which took another thirty minutes, it was Lucinda's duty to run fresh ribbons in Muriel's underthings, tidy the room, mend small faults in lacy edgings.

The instruments with which Muriel improved her fingers, her brows and her complexion were as complicated as a surgeon's. One large tray, which could be pulled out of a clothes-press in the wall, was devoted to manicuring devices. Quite familiar with her tools, Muriel would reach dexterously from one little snipper to another, carving here, paring there, filing, polishing, dipping, drying. . . . Muriel took a fanatical interest in her hands, which Lucinda, after a critical study, thought too thin to be pretty; and she began to wonder what this meticulous person, whom she had at first thought twenty-two and now began to believe was ten years older, was gaining by this industrious care of her body. Why didn't Muriel get married?

"Do you like my pictures?" she asked on the Wednesday of Lucinda's employment.

"They're lovely," cried Lucinda. "And so many naval officers. They look splendid in their uniforms."

"My brother was in the navy," said Miss Owsley, and went on applying a brownish grease to her eyebrows. "I've always had a passion for keeping photographs. There are stacks and stacks of them I haven't room to put up."

ONE stack of them, at least, was apparent. It lay where it had fallen, on the glass top of a painted corner-table. Idly, because there was nothing apparent to do just then, Lucinda began running through them. Another picture of Tags, this time in a formal high collar; two or three of the same tall, youngish man with the weakly handsome face; one of a bumpish-looking football-player with Pennsylvania's letter on his chest.

And then there came one over which Lucinda lingered, puzzled. He had changed so, looked so sleek, wore such a professionally photographic smile. . . . But it was certainly Daddy. Something about the way he wore his hair, his coat, his necktie, seemed to have changed him from a tobacco broker to an actor. But the small, square handwriting was enough to identify him—"To Muriel from Ashton Brock."

"Where did you get this?" Lucinda was about to ask, but a cautious spirit had grown on her with her way of life. Instead of speaking, she was about to slip the picture under its pile when Miss Owsley, who must have been watching her in the glass, spoke without interrupting her occupation:

"Isn't he nice-looking?"

"The—the actor, you mean?" asked Lucinda faintly.

"How did you know that he was an actor?"

"Oh—by his clothes—and everything."

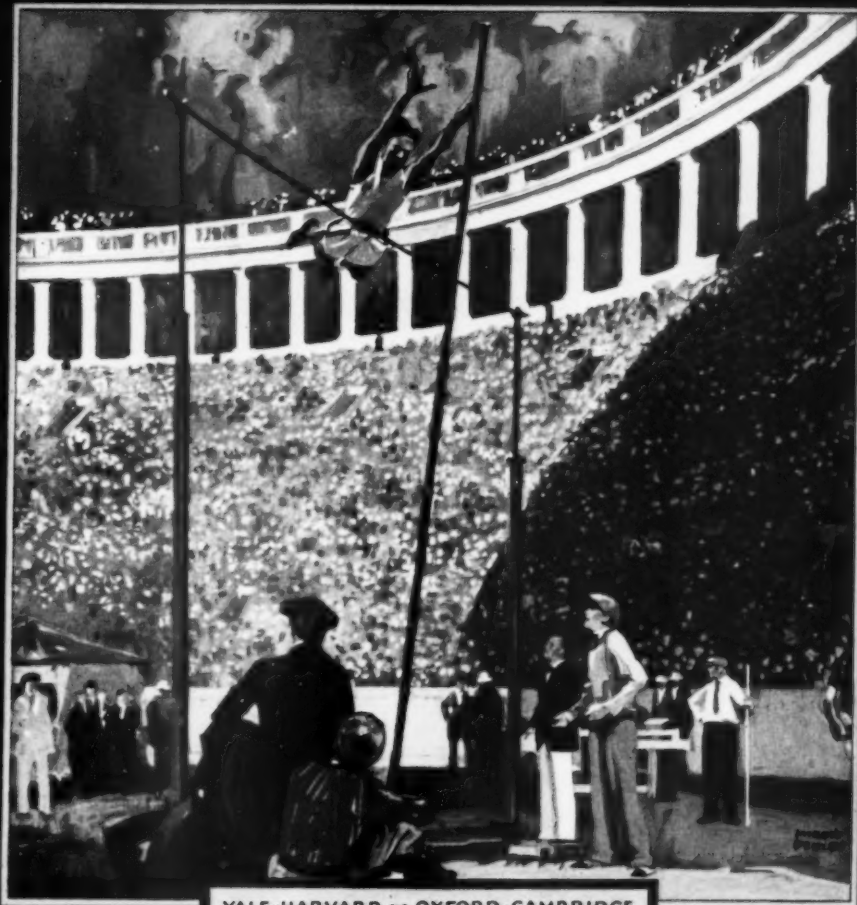
"You smart child!"

"Where—where did you meet him?" faltered the young girl, and had a feeling that her curiosity was taking her too far.

"In New York—at a dance. Lucinda, will you fill this little jar with hot water? Very hot water."

That was all. The rest was conjecture. Miss Owsley had met Daddy at a dance. Quick with the matchmaking instinct which the females of our species share in common, Lucinda began looking at Miss Owsley in another light. Would she be good for Daddy? On the way back with Muriel's hot water, she had an opportunity to study her again in the glass. Her face, at that instant, looked too narrow, her eyes too close-set—and anxious.

**The strange career of Lucinda Shelby comes to some of its most dramatic moments in the chapters which follow. Don't fail to read the next installment of Wallace Irwin's great novel in our forthcoming September issue.**



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## RIDE 'IM COWBOY!

(Continued from page 87)

wide apart and every muscle quivering. His head is up, and looking back at the hunk of humanity that was astraddle of him—it was just setting there like a wart on a log not at all realizing what it really was setting on, and not prepared on account that it didn't know what to prepare for and how. If the savena had only been an average mean horse, it wouldn't been so bad. My loop was built and craving to be dabbed on that pony's head before it was too late, and just then the savena bowed his neck and the performance was started.

I figured it a miracle when as the first dust cleared, the Pilgrim was still in the saddle, a miracle that the savena had only made one jump, the longest, highest and *easiest* jump I ever seen a horse make. What (I thought) could that horse do if he really set out to buck, but I could see he had no such intentions, and we couldn't believe our eyes when we see that pony just a-trotting around the corral and behaving like a good gentle horse.

"What do you know about that!" says the foreman, all puzzled. "If somebody was telling me about this instead of me seeing it, I'd just have to call that somebody a liar."

It was hard to believe, for everybody excepting the Pilgrim, but he didn't know the difference, and he thought the savena had really bucked when he took him up in the air so easy that once. His conceit showed up sky high again, and the foreman, noticing it, figured something ought to be done before that conceit caused him to take in too much territory and finally get the worst of a deal.

"Bill," he says, looking my way, "you take that horse and ride him around for the benefit of this here Pilgrim, and you," he says to that Pilgrim, "just watch that horse act up when this cowboy forks him. I just want to show you that either the horse, or Providence, or something, has allowed a heap, by the fact that you're still right side up."

"If you watch close, you'll see that horse act *natural* and according to his instinct, which won't be at all like he did when you was on him. This cowboy won't be making him buck, either. He won't have to. But there'll be something in the air which'll tell that savena horse that he's free to do as he damn pleases this time."

The foreman was right, and soon as I climbed on, and the blindfold was jerked off, the savena went at it and to his liking. He made a fast and furious circle of the corral, and run everybody out of it. I wasn't finding no time to fan him, as was my habit in such cases, and my spurs stayed neutral and away from that pony's hide. He tore up the earth in good shape, and I began to find fault with my saddle. I was feeling it aplenty, but I'll be doggone if I could find any part of it that I could grip.

But somehow I was still riding straight up when a rope settled around the savena's neck, and he finds himself face to face with the snubbing-post again; I knowed the possibilities of that pony's all four feet, so when I went to get off, I grabbed his ears, raised myself out of the saddle and slid along his neck to the ground. I felt the wind of his front feet as I did it, but I didn't linger long, and in another second I was out of his reach.

I don't know what-all the foreman had been telling the Pilgrim while I was riding the horse, but I think he'd been doing a lot of explaining for that Pilgrim's own good.

"The good luck you had this morning don't last," I hear him say, "and I'm only telling you this so as you don't get killed before you learn. Do you understand?"

The Pilgrim said he did.

FROM that day on, the Pilgrim kept on understanding. He changed considerable both in appearance and feeling. That tough look he was packing when he first come left him for good, and the reason was, that every time he did try to be tough or look that way, something happened which showed how helpless he was to the ways of horses and critters. He was showed how to wear his spurs, and when to use 'em, and one morning he come out without that wide belt which nobody wears but the greenhorn that tries to look Western. His cap-and-ball six-shooter was missing too, and with his sleeves rolled down and buttoned at the wrist as they should be, he looked natural and just what he was, not a cowboy—yet—but just a good feller, and that's all we cared, far as we was concerned.

Shedding off them ornaments the way he had, and packing a smile the way he did, made him welcome to the outfit, and even though he was of no use, and in the way a plenty of times, we got so we liked him a lot.

The foreman was inclined to show him the road out of the country at first, and remarked that he didn't want to take the responsibility of having a feller like him hanging around and getting crippled. "And what's more," he says, "I'm not wanting to start no kindergarten outfit." But he put it off a couple of days and then it was too late.

By that time the Pilgrim had got next to himself and figured he should explain, so one night he tells us all about who and what he was—saying as how he'd always been strong on athletics, and the life of a cowboy had always sort of appealed to him.

"I've read all I could find about cowboys," he goes on, "but according to the impression I got from all that reading, it only put me in the wrong, and that explains some of my actions when I first come."

"I've rode a lot on my father's estate, and that gave me the idea that I was a master at it. I was, back there, but this is very different. Anyway, that was the cause of me passing the remark that I could ride anything. I had no idea of what these horses could do."

"Sure," breaks in the foreman, "but you aint seen *all* they can do yet, son."

"I know I haven't," resumes the Pilgrim, "and that's the reason I'm asking if you'd let me stay on and learn. I'm beginning to think that cowpunching is quite a profession."

"It is that," agrees the foreman.

AS the Pilgrim stayed on, he found that cowpunching was even more of a profession than he'd thought. Every day something happened where he'd see that it took nerve, skill, action, and years of experience to make the cowboy what he was, so he had a hunch that you had to be *born* one.

Like one day the Pilgrim was helping in holding the herd while some was being cut out. A big steer broke out and was turned back. He broke out the second time, only to be headed off and run back into the herd again, but when he come out the third time, he was wanting to fight, and he had a good pair of horns to do it with.

It happened that the Pilgrim was the only man that side of the herd when the steer broke out that third time, and when the foreman hollered, "Bring that steer back," the Pilgrim done the best he could.

There again he didn't know the possibilities of a mad steer, and all that saved him was the wise little cow-horse he was riding, but he wasn't going after that critter again.

One of the riders took out after him and dabbed his line on the mad steer as he

turned to make ribbons out of him and his horse. Right about then the rope tightened up, and the steer was rolled a few times. When he was let up again, he was out of wind and there was sand in his eyes, but he could still hear, and the noise of the belling herd sounded mighty good to him just then, so when he got back to it, he stayed.

Riding back to camp that night the Pilgrim catches up with me and asks: "Say, Bill, will you tell me how long it takes a feller to learn how to throw a rope?"

YEP! The Pilgrim was all for learning, and he missed nothing. The foreman had let him have a few old saddle-horses and he was good to 'em. He'd noticed that we didn't run our horses unless it was part of the work, and necessary, and he done the same. In his string there was one wise old pony that could buck pretty fair sometimes, and the Pilgrim had been trying mighty hard to stick him. Finally one day he did stick him, and I never seen anybody look so tickled in my life. But the next day the old horse threw him again.

There was days when the foreman would ask the Pilgrim to stay around camp and help the cook, and there again he was agreeable and all interest. The big Dutch ovens had him wondering how they could turn out such good-tasting grub, and he had no fear of sticking his hands in the dish-water when the meal was over.

At night, when the herd was bedded down and all was still, he'd most always get sort of confidential as regards to his feelings about what he was experiencing, and the general drift I got of his talk kind of woke me up to the things I'd seen all my life and never really appreciated. I'd been born and raised amongst all what he pointed out as wonders, but to me everything was only *natural* till the Pilgrim started talking about it.

"Some day, Bill," he says to me, "you want to leave this country, go to where there's a thousand people living in about the same space it takes to bed these cattle down, go to a big city, stay there for a while; then when you come back, you'll know what I mean."

Yessir, the Pilgrim was all right. He couldn't ride; he couldn't rope; he didn't savvy cattle; and he was in the way a lot of times; but he was all right.

He stayed with the outfit all that spring, and through the following summer till way late in the fall when all the work was done. He'd learned considerable for one so green as he was when he first come; his cheeks had lost some of their rounded pinkness, and he was lean and wiry as they make 'em.

The work was over, and one morning our checks was handed out, saddles was stuffed in gunny-sacks ready for the baggage-car and the cowboys begin to scatter. Some was for going farther north into Montana and Alberta, but most of 'em that was leaving the country for the winter was heading south, and me too. My next stopping-place was going to be Douglas, Arizona, where I figured on getting steady winter riding.

As for the Pilgrim, his intentions was to stick with the outfit, remarking it was the best place for him, and that he'd learn a lot in seeing how the stock was being took care of through the winter.

I stayed in Arizona all through that winter and the next year; another year later I drifted into New Mexico and went to work there breaking horses for a big horse outfit. One spring found me in Colorado and the next spring in Nevada. I was just following the trail that answered the craving a cowpuncher has, to see what it looks like on the other side of the big blue ridge that's always out there ahead.

And it's early one spring four years later when I drifts in to the Three Rivers Cattle Company's camp, where I'd first seen the Pilgrim.

The place hadn't changed any. The same old chuck-wagon was at the back of the log camp and getting its spring cleaning before starting out for the spring round-up. Not a soul was in sight, and I turns my horse loose, figgering to wait till the boys rode in.

I walks in the house, and busy at the stove was the same old cook that was with the outfit when I left four years ago. After a "Howdy" and a handshake, he tells me of who all is still with the outfit that I know. I learns the same foreman was still handling this part of the range, and outside of another rider the rest was all strangers.

The Pilgrim had left the outfit a couple of years before, on account, as he'd said, that he wanted to try his luck somewhere else for a change, but the cook had a hunch that he'd got tired of the life and went home—back East.

The foreman thought the same thing, as he remarked that night.

"You know, Bill," he says, "such folks as the Pilgrim don't last. Soon as the newness wears off, they quit and go back with the idea that they know all about this—that there's no more to learn—when at the same time they haven't started to know at all, and are just as helpless as ever. Some folks have an idea that you can qualify to be an all around good cow-hand in a couple of years, and where they get that idea, I don't know."

I stayed and worked for the Three Rivers outfit that year, and when once in a while the foreman and me would be riding along together we'd most generally find ourselves talking of the Pilgrim and wondering of his whereabouts.

"He was getting to be pretty good before he left," says the foreman one day, "and if he'd stayed he might of turned out to be a real cow-hand. I tried to keep him, too, on account I was interested in the boy, and I'd got to liking him, but somehow he'd got the craving to go, and I had to let him."

Come a time when our talks on the Pilgrim finally wore off, and it aint long afterward when we plumb forgot about him. New riders kept a-coming in the places of them that'd leave, and with the few changes that'd take place off and on there was nothing left but a far-away memory of the young feller we'd called the Pilgrim.

**W**INTERS come and went; spring round-ups and fall works followed; and steady, right along with the weather, I drew my wages from the Three Rivers Cattle Company. I'd been with that outfit going on three years, and once again we was running in saddle stock and getting ready for another spring round-up. The chuck-wagon

was getting another clean-up; new saddles was getting broke in, new ropes stretched.

The days was getting long again, and evenings would find us by the corral till dark, where we'd either be fixing our saddles or chaps, or cutting up pieces of rawhide.

It was at such a time and place one evening, when glancing to the west, I spots a rider on the sky line. He was coming our way. I looks up again when I thinks he is close enough to identify. There was some thing sort of familiar about him, but right then I couldn't do any placing, and it's not till he rides closer that I makes him out—the Pilgrim.

And he didn't look at all like a pilgrim no more. He was just quiet and Western, but there was no mistaking that grin of his as he seen me.

The foreman was next after me as I went out to meet him, and when he reached the spot that me and the Pilgrim was holding down, there was no chance for grass to grow there for quite a spell.

The conversation covered three or four years of time, and it run steady till the beds was unrolled and everybody crawled in. We was glad to hear that the Pilgrim had stayed West and worked on with different outfits till, as he put it, he could qualify as an average with the range riders.

The foreman is grinning some, and pretty soon he asks:

"Do you still think you can ride anything?"

"No," says the Pilgrim, laughing. "It's been proved about fifty times that I couldn't, but there's one horse I'd like to try again just to see if I do qualify, and that's the savena. Is he still with the outfit?"

"You bet he is, son—and I'll let you play with him in the morning, all you want," says the foreman.

**O**N account of his orneriness, the savena had been having it mighty easy. He was, according, fat as a seal but as mean as ever. He'd been rode a few times since that morning of the Pilgrim's tryout, but he fought so much in saddling and done so much bucking afterward, that every time he had to be turned loose again, he'd be all in and not fit to ride out on a day's work.

He hadn't hurt nobody lately, but that wasn't his fault, for nobody give him the chance. So, as it was, the Pilgrim had the same horse to test his ability on as he'd had some six years or more before, only the horse might act different this time. It all depended on that horse's ability, or what the Pilgrim had learned.

There was no mistaking but what the Pilgrim had learnt considerable through them years of steady work. The proof of that was in every step he made. There was confidence plain to see, and when he opened the corral gate the next morning and unlimbered

his rope to snare the savena, I didn't have none of the worried feeling that I'd had that morning, six years past.

Nothing was holding the savena back this time; he acted natural. A rope was holding him to the snubbing-post, and when he showed his teeth and went to reaching for the Pilgrim with his front feet, another rope took them front feet away from him and he was layed flat to earth.

He bellered his hate for the Pilgrim while that *hombre*, cool as a December morning, was drawing the cinch of his saddle under the savena. All by his lonesome he saddled him and eased a hackamore on the mean-looking head. Not a false move he made, and when he straddled all he could of the savena, which is kinda hard to do in that laying position, and all was set for us to take off the rope that'd leave the horse free to go, that boy was packing a smile we was glad to see, for it was a cowboy's smile, when the cowboy is at the height of his glory and rarin' to go.

**T**HE savena was free, and he went up as if there'd been steel springs boosting him from the start. He bucked good and stayed in one spot, and he sure made good use of all the atmosphere and space that was in that one spot. Every once in a while we'd hear a spur-rowel sing; the savena had reached up while in midair and kicked it.

Yessir! That horse meant business, and we didn't want to think of what would happen right then if the Pilgrim lost his seat. We could see it was the savena's ambitions to have the boy under his feet for just one second.

But that boy wasn't worried, far as we could see. If anything, he was sure enjoying himself. He kept a-reefing the savena and a-smiling, and only once did I see him reach down as though he wanted to choke the saddle-horn, but he didn't; he rode over the ruffle easy enough and with his hat he sure dusted that pony as though he was in need of it.

But the ticklish spell was still to come. The savena had quit bucking, and like a wolf at a gopher-hole he was waiting for the Pilgrim to leave the saddle; that was to be his last chance to do some exterminating.

Of a sudden the savena feels both his ears grabbed and twisted in a way which for the time being separates him from his thoughts of damage—

In another second the Pilgrim is on the ground and making far-apart tracks toward the corral bars. It aint till then that the savena comes to, and seeing his victim getting away, he makes a running jump that puts him within reach. But he was just a shade too late, and when we helped the Pilgrim through the corral and on the other side, only part of his shirt was missing.

The Pilgrim was a pilgrim no longer.

## BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW

(Continued from page 83)

Atlantic City for one day. But she had found the sea so majestic, the great hotels so awe-inspiring and the rolling-chair conversations so stimulating, that she had been persuaded to stay over the week-end. She did not reach New York till Tuesday afternoon.

**W**HEN she came in, Lamoree was waiting for her. His manner to Torrey Lyall was ill-bred, to say the least. Torrey would not wait but hurried away. Amy was humiliated to the depths by the contrast between Lyall's delicacy and Lamoree's boorishness.

Then Lamoree handed Amy the telegram he had sent, saying:

"I am my own messenger boy. I apolo-

gize for intruding on you and your guests. It breaks my heart to find you in the company of a rotter like Torrey Lyall. Honey, in heaven's name, steer clear of his sort."

She brushed his hands from her sleeve and rebuked his unfair play with the name and character of a man so much his superior:

"Torrey Lyall is a gentleman and a man of honor. Do you realize that if I hadn't sacrificed myself to marry you I could have married Torrey Lyall? Do you realize what I gave up for you?"

"Torrey Lyall!" Lamoree sneered. "He'd never marry you. He's not the marrying kind."

"You think not! He's told me a hundred times how quickly he'd marry me if I were free."

This frightened Lamoree out of his self-assurance. He gasped:

"In God's name, honey, you don't want to be free of me, do you?"

"Naturally," she answered, finding courage somehow to make the declaration. Lamoree bent down and stared at her as if he would ransack her soul. She gave him stare for stare, and he evidently found no trace of affection left for him in her heart. He fell back and clenched his fists as if he would beat her to the floor. But he gained control of himself and groaned:

"I'll give you anything in my power that will make for your happiness—including your freedom, if you really want it."

Amy could hardly believe her ears. She cried:





"SOME FEW YEARS AGO I ate Yeast for bacterial infections, boils and carbuncles. Within three weeks my infections disappeared and I have never been troubled since. But I have an especial message to mothers. Four children were born to me in four years, and they are perfect babies and I am a good specimen of a healthy mother—thanks to Fleischmann's Yeast. Not only did it settle my stomach, when other things failed, but it also toned up my system, and gave me an appetite, which is most essential in motherhood."

THEODOSIA HESSON, R. N., Brooklyn, N. Y.

## Now they are really well



"A YEAR AGO two friends and myself went on a hunting trip into an isolated, arid region. On our way out we picked up a piece of rich, gold-bearing float. We stayed nine weeks prospecting—living on the crude supplies the country afforded—and hope. My stomach was weak from abuse. My bonanza was a coarse, irritated skin—a breaking-out all over my body. I used a horde of 'positive cures' and then, discouraged, tried Fleischmann's Yeast. In two months I was as I am today. My skin was better than 'back to normal' and I was ready for every 'let's go.'" V. C. SPIES, Barrett, Cal.

*Vital, joyous, certain once more of their power, thousands have found the way to glorious health through one simple food.*

NOT a "cure-all," not a medicine in any sense—Fleischmann's Yeast is simply a remarkable fresh food.

The millions of tiny active yeast plants in every cake invigorate the whole system. They aid digestion—clear the skin—banish the poisons of constipation. Where cathartics give only temporary relief, yeast strengthens the intestinal muscles and makes them healthy and active. And day by day it releases new stores of energy.

All grocers have Fleischmann's Yeast. Start eating it today! Buy several cakes at a time—they will keep fresh in a cool dry place for two or three days. And let us send you a free copy of our latest booklet on Yeast for Health. Health Research Dept. M-19, The Fleischmann Company, 701 Washington Street, New York.



EAT 2 OR 3 CAKES regularly every day before meals: on crackers—in fruit juices or milk—or just plain. For constipation especially, dissolve one cake in hot water (not scalding) before breakfast and at bedtime.



"FOR SIX YEARS I was ailing, nervous and depressed, interested in nothing, accomplishing nothing, rarely for twenty-four consecutive hours free from pain—all caused I know by intestinal putrefaction. At last I asked a nurse if there was anything in the 'yeast fad?' She assured me there was. I began eating daily three cakes of Fleischmann's Yeast. Relief from constipation and pain followed. I continued to take it as a tonic and food, regaining strength and energy and the long-discontinued compliments on my complexion. Today I am vigorously well, praise be to Fleischmann's Yeast."

KATE D. MEARES, College Place, S. C.

"Do you mean it?"

"Absolutely."

"Then I'll just take you up on that."

Of course, Lamoree would hedge and spoil everything. She had thought him a truly chivalrous knight for a moment, but at once he made his reservations:

"I'll give you a divorce, but not in New York. There's only one ground here, and I don't care to be tarred with that—especially as it wouldn't be very complimentary to you. I'm going out to the Coast to finish my business. You can come out there and sue me on the ground of desertion. I'll give you all the money I've got."

She spent a night of bliss imagining her life with Torrey Lyall. The great Lyall family would recognize her, and she would wear its name. There was a branch abroad that had married into the nobility. It would be gratifying, especially to an American girl, to be able to say lightly: "As I was saying to the Duchess,—my sister-in-law, you know,—'Mary,' I said—"

She could visit old castles and steep herself in the venerable traditions of the nations that had traditions. She would rise at last from the grossness of her origins. She would be able to save her soul from failure, after all. She had not succeeded in any of the other arts, but the art of life was hers.

When her husband—he must be that for a horribly long while—when Lamoree took his departure, he said:

"I am sorry that I couldn't make you happy. I wish Torrey Lyall the best of luck—and you a little better than that. I'm afraid I'm not doing the right thing by you, but—well, God bless you! Never forget that I did love you—and I do. I suppose I always shall. I'm sorry I—well, hell—good-by!"

Amy smiled bitterly at his uncouthness and ran to the telephone to summon Torrey Lyall and make him the happiest man on earth. He came over at once, but to one of her timid nature it was difficult—impossible—to break it tactfully to Lyall that she was free now. She could hardly tell him point-blank. So she did not tell him at all at first.

They went about as usual for several evenings before he looked down at her where she nestled trustfully in his right arm—his left being engaged with the steering-wheel—and moaned:

"If only you were free!"

"Would you marry me, if I were?"

"In a minute, you little devil!"

"Well, I am free—or at least I can be. My husband has offered me a divorce."

A great silence fell on Lyall. The glorious news must have stricken him dumb with joy. He almost ran the car off the road into a ditch before he could get his right arm free and whip the car back to the highway. He drove a long while in silence before he spoke:

"Amy, old sweetie, this is a devil of a pickle. You see, my people are down on divorcees—horribly. We've had so many of them in our family. They've got so much publicity. Our family is rather fed up on headlines. My old man said that if I ever got there again, he would change his own name as well as his will. You realize what I mean. You understand me, don't you?"

"Perfectly," she said. And when he slid his hand back to its former place, she ripped a piece out of it with her fingernails and taught him that a gentleman does not embrace a lady unless he is engaged to her.

"Oh, very well!" said Torrey Lyall, with a good deal less of chivalry than she had expected from him. He set her down at her apartment and muttered something about seeing her soon again.

AMY suffered unspeakably, as only a tender womanly soul like hers could suffer in a world too rough for it. She shrank back

into herself and hardly left the house for days except in the company of some other member of her retinue.

After a time she received a letter from the West. The postmark led her to think it from Lamoree, but the handwriting was the handwriting of Nicolette Maynard. It said:

"Dear Amy:

"What on earth ails Jim? If he is out here for his health, as I am for mine, you had better run out and see him or you'll lose him. He looks as forlorn as if he had an engagement to die tomorrow. When I asked him about you, his eyes grew wet, all of a sudden. If you don't want to lose him, you'd better hurry out and take care of the poor darling. He still adores you. Of course, I can't see why, but men see things in us that aren't there, and Jim has evidently found in you what I have never discovered—a soul.

"Otherwise I am,

"Yours sincerely,

"Nicolette Maynard."

Of course, Amy disdained to answer a stab like that. She was not ready to leave for the Coast till she could make sure of her future. It would not have been fair to herself to divorce Jim until she was sure.

## "The Old Home Town"

Doesn't that title awaken memories? The novel that bears it is one of the very best this magazine has ever published, a novel for every American, by—

RUPERT HUGHES

It begins in the next—the September—issue.

Just to see if there was any honor among men, she let it slip to each of her retinue that she had been forced to escape from her husband's clutches and would soon be free. And not a man offered her his protection! It was a cold world for the shorn lamb.

Lamoree continued to send her money and to hint in his letters that he would be only too glad to be taken back. But a clean heart like hers could hardly put on a worn-out love again. So she wrote him flatly that there was no hope. And still she delayed to go to the Coast and pluck one of the divorcees that flower so profusely there.

By and by a friend of hers who had been West brought her the news that Lamoree was seen all the time with Nicolette Maynard; they were inseparable.

And now Amy felt that she must act. She must thwart the plot of Nicolette to decoy Amy's husband to her own service. Such insolence, such indecency, must be punished.

Amy went West as an avenging angel. She did not forewarn Lamoree of her visit, and he only ran across her accidentally. When the first strained greetings were exchanged, she charged Lamoree with being Nicolette's lover.

He fairly thundered at her: "I love only you, and Nicolette knows it. She has been very kind to me, and I shall be grateful to her forever for her goodness to me. But I cannot love her as I love you. Can't you take me back? Give me another chance!"

"It would be indecent, since I don't love you," Amy said. It was not easy to resist his prayers. She was lonely and neglected and had been bitterly deceived in the men she had trusted. But she could not stoop to a vulgar intrigue with a man she did not love, even though he was still her husband according to the man-made law. A higher

law coerced her to a higher destiny. Once she was freed by a quiet divorce, she might find Torrey Lyall in a less timorous mood. The poor boy must not be left to be bullied by the tyrannical snobs who made up his precious "family." After all, America was a democracy, and they should be reminded of it.

So she appealed to Lamoree not to prolong her painful stay in the West. She begged him to desert her promptly, and she put her case in the hands of an eager young lawyer who drew up settlement papers. Lamoree called at her lawyer's office with his own lawyer.

When he read the papers she had had drawn up, he stared at Amy and said:

"But my dear girl, this means bankruptcy for me. You don't want to cripple me, do you? Or do you?"

"I don't see how I can live decently on any less. It costs more for me to live single than it would for two of us together."

"Then let us live together—for economy's sake, if no other."

"Don't be nasty," said Amy, shuddering in the presence of the two lawyers.

Lamoree stared at her, and so far forgot even what little delicacy he had as to snarl:

"You're even cold-blooded than Nicolette said you were. You haven't a heart at all, have you?"

Amy appealed to her lawyer: "Doesn't such language constitute cruelty in your State?"

"It surely does," the lawyer said. "We'll add it to the complaint."

Lamoree's lawyer advised him not to be afraid of any such bluff and not to pay such exorbitant blackmail, but Lamoree snapped back:

"I can't haggle over money with a woman. Give her what she wants." He signed the document in spite of his lawyer's protests.

As he was about to leave, Amy thought it only right to administer a little spiritual reproof. She did not lose her temper or comport herself in anything but a ladylike manner. She said with severe gentleness:

"Thank Nicolette for her kind words, and tell her that I congratulate her in succeeding at last in getting you away from me."

"Oh, my God!" Lamoree exploded. "Is there no limit to your beastliness?"

"That's a rather cruel word, isn't it, Mr. Wickham?" Amy asked her lawyer.

"I've got it down," said Mr. Wickham.

Amy added: "It might be well to look into Mr. Lamoree's true relations with Miss Maynard. Where there's so much smoke, there must be some fire."

"You dare to besmirch the reputation of that sweet soul, and I'll fight you to the death!" Lamoree roared, and seizing the settlement papers, he held them ready to tear across.

Mr. Wickham leaped up in alarm, and poor Amy swooned at the prospect of losing her financial independence, and being forced back to the sordidness of begging pittance from a man she did not love.

"Calm yourself, Mr. Lamoree," she said. "I have no intention of troubling your saintly Nicolette."

"Do you swear that you won't even mention her name in connection with mine?" Lamoree insisted.

"I swear!" said Amy, lifting her little left hand.

And Lamoree flung the paper at her and dashed out of the lawyer's office.

IN due time the case of Lamoree vs. Lamoree was called before the Court of Domestic Relations, and poor Amy had to take the stand and undergo examination. When Lamoree's lawyer made no cross-examination, the judge took a hand and ask the trembling creature:

"Do you know of any reason why your husband deserted you?"

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"None, Your Honor. None!" she answered, aspen with the humiliation she must somehow endure.

"Is there another woman in the case?" the judge pursued.

"They say there is," Amy mumbled.

"Who is she?"

Amy thought of her oath. Even though it was a left-handed promise, she was reluctant to break it. She pleaded:

"Must I mention her name, Your Honor?"

"Yes. I insist upon knowing."

Amy hesitated. Her eyes met Lamoree's. They were fierce and threatening. She raised her great eyes to the judge, but his face was stern.

"Tell me!" he commanded.

What choice had she? The court commanded her. She whispered the name:

"Nicolette Maynard."

The reporters began to scribble rapidly. The whole court was electrified, for Nicolette Maynard's name was the last that one would expect to hear in such a place. Lamoree sprang to his feet in a throe of horror, but his lawyer dragged him back to his chair, and an officer of the court gripped his shoulder.

The judge looked from Lamoree's rage-distorted features into the white mien of Amy, and he nodded with disgust. He spoke to Amy with a fatherly sympathy:

"Did you love your husband?"

Something in the necessity of the drama forced Amy to realize that if she denied her love she would justify Lamoree's desertion, perhaps mitigate Nicolette's guilt. The strain broke her courage, and she moaned:

"I did love him. I do. I always will!"

This startled the judge, and he asked:

"Then why do you want a divorce?"

"Why do I want a divorce?" Amy stammered—and she laughed hysterically. "Why do I want a divorce! Why, I want to do anything that will make him happy."

The judge's eyes went wet as she bent her

head and sobbed. He might almost have said with the poet: "I heard her tears."

He glanced to where Lamoree was engaged in a fiercely whispered wrangle with his attorney, who was saying:

"Let it go! Be a man! Let her have what she wants! It will be all over in a minute."

"James Lamoree, take the stand!" the judge proclaimed, then said with the courtesy of a Bayard:

"You may step down, Mrs. Lamoree."

Lamoree rose to his full height, dragged leaden feet across the floor, stumbled as he hoisted himself to the chair in the witness-box and sat grimly defiant, his face streaked white and red with guilt. The judge's words were like chisel-strokes:

"Do you know this Nicolette Maynard?"

"Yes."

"Very well?"

"Very well."

"Are you infatuated with her?"

"Well—"

"Yes or no! Do you love her?"

"Yes!"

"That will do. I am going to grant this decree. But before I do, I want to tell you, Mr. James Lamoree, that you have made a great mistake. I think, Mr. Lamoree, that you will live to see the day when you will be sorry for your neglect of so noble a woman as this plaintiff. A man can never afford to cast aside the love of a good woman. Step down."

The judge turned from him as from a whipped cur and busied himself with the signature of the necessary papers.

Lamoree hobbled across the floor. Callous as he had been shown to be, he was a gargoyle of confusion. But poor Amy—in the words of one of the reporters: "She broke and wept bitterly as kindly friends led her tenderly from the room."

It was another proof of Prothero's theory that self-sacrifice is always overworked and underpaid.

## HEAVEN BENT

(Continued from page 51)

who he was, or what had happened to him. Beyond a whispered "Please," or a "No, thank you," he seldom spoke. Silent and helpless, he lay in a small room on the top floor, his body held rigid by bandages and splints. Four bare walls inclosed his world, and a half-open door was his gate of expectancy. Beyond this gateway footsteps were always passing and repassing, but seldom did they pause.

Those who entered his room only did so as a matter of duty and routine—doctors hurrying on their morning round, impersonal nurses measuring bitter medicine, or an over-worked male attendant dashing in to pick up a tray and dash out again. These were the only diversions of little Jockey Robertson, and he waited for them wistfully because the entr'actes were so long and wearisome. The boy, to whom music, hoof-beats and the roar of thousands had been a daily joy, now lay for hours at a time motionless in a silent, unvisited tomb.

Though his fogged mind could not comprehend it all, still he felt his weakness, and seemed to sense, as might a reincarnated spirit, that happiness lay in a previous existence from which he had been torn. He had lost something precious, something that would never be his again. The effort to think brought occasional results, but more frequently slow tears of helplessness that overflowed brown eyes and coursed quietly over white cheeks to a whiter pillow.

Then one afternoon, without any preliminary whir of wings or official notice from heaven, an angel glided into his room. She advanced quickly on tiptoes—a girl in the uniform of a novice nurse, slender, blue-eyed,

pretty as a picture. There was nothing impersonal in her gaze, no hint of aloofness or restraint. She had stolen in to give, and the gift was in her eyes long before he felt the warm pressure of feminine lips full upon his own.

She smiled down on him a moment, patted his cheek, smoothed the bedclothes, and tiptoed out again, looking back with a friendly smile and a warning "Shh!"

The surreptitious visit was the first of many, filched from under the very noses of those whose business it was to enforce hospital rules. Mostly, it was during the night, or in the early hours of the morning, that Nellie Wendell managed to play doctor and nurse and ministering angel all in one to a youth who appeared to live only for her coming.

All the emotional vagaries of the girl's nature, instincts never gratified until now, were unleashed when she found herself alone with this stricken young star of the turf.

She crooned to him in a sort of savage tenderness, patting his cheeks and hands, lavishing her wealth of feminine warmth and pity; and she took her pay in the dumb adoration in his eyes, in the heightened color of his cheeks, and in the knowledge that to some one who needed her she was giving, giving, giving!

It was as though the girl were emptying her fresh young blood into his veins, and in all truth, it was a transfusion of vitality, mystic but none the less real. Robby was wooed back from shadowland—and the effort brought exhaustion to Nell Wendell. The little novice was suffering from broken sleep and a nervous strain. There had been no



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counterbalance to her emotions. One night, she laid her head on his pillow with an arm over his shoulders and her lips against his cheek.

"Boy, dear," she whispered. "I've got to beat it now. I'm—so—sleepy—so—damn—sleepy."

And it was thus they found her in the morning, when her bells went unanswered, and old Four-eyes came snooping into the room, followed by the floor nurse and the house doctor.

No doubt it was bad enough, but a spectated, maidenly dragon in starched linen knew how to make it look a whole lot worse. The little novice, startled out of her sleep by a triumphant superior, hopelessly condemned before she had a chance to gather her wits, uttered wild, absurd things that doomed her forever to the blacklist of her chosen profession.

Dull scarlet crept into the cheeks of the head nurse. "That will do!" she commanded. "Take off your uniform and leave this hospital at once. You a nurse! Why, you wretched little wanton! You shameless—"

The little novice straightened, leaped across the room, and smacked her superior squarely in the face.

"That's to remember me by!" she sobbed. "Good-by, Robby! Good-by, kid!" And in another second she was darting down the hall, lips quiver, and hands tugging at the shoulder-straps on her apron.

PORGINGTON saw her a little later, descending the side stairs in street dress and carrying a small satchel.

"What's up?" he asked.

"Everything!" she answered. "I'm fired. Oh, Georgie, you're right—you're so damn' right! I've learned my lesson! The only thing a girl can do in this world is laugh it off. Call for me tonight, Georgie. I want you to show—me—how!"

The waters of disillusionment run swiftly toward a whirlpool that sucks all feminine flotsam down, and down, and down! Into this remorseless current, Nell Wendell threw herself with reckless abandon. The waters closed upon her eagerly—tossing, churning, buffeting—sapping what little she had left of reason and will-power. And all too quickly she was spinning downstream in the clutch of the undertow. . . .

Destiny, however, had reserved a trump card. There was this strange feature in an otherwise common occurrence: Nellie Wendell, it is true, had left the hospital and rushed into the limbo of the lost; but the girl's spirit—the only part of her that was worth saving—had remained behind, locked safely in the heart and numbed intelligence of Jockey Robertson! There it lived in an eerie sort of way, and yet so much alive, that he scarcely missed her presence in the flesh.

He had only dimly comprehended the significance of the drama enacted in his room. Soon it faded entirely. His memory was as weak as the muscles in his body. He could remember nothing very long. Only one thing was impressed upon him with cameo clarity—a girl was mistress of his soul. He knew every tone of her voice, every quick flutter of her hands, every play of emotion on her face. He could still feel the pressure of her lips upon his own. This abiding illusion was the mainspring of his new existence, his accepted *raison d'être* for all things.

There were times, of course, when his strengthening faculties fought for substance to his dream, and he became conscious of an absence as well as a presence. He would have liked to put his wondering into words, but his strength was still unequal to initiative effort. He was shy and timid, afraid to ask questions. From wheel-chair, he progressed to crutches, and then a cane. He haunted the wards and corridors—looking, always looking—and never finding.

The time came when Dr. Commerford, brusque and hearty, pronounced Robby strong enough to leave the hospital.

"We've done all we can for you, my boy! The man you were riding for when you got hurt has paid your bill and left a little money on deposit in the office. You can get it when you're ready. Take care of yourself, son, and keep off the horses!"

"Yes sir," said Robby. "You mean you—you don't want me here any more?"

"Well, let's not put it that way," laughed the surgeon. "Most people are glad to get out of here. It isn't that we don't want you, Robby. The idea is that you shouldn't want us any more. You'll get your bearings in a few days. Hunt up a friend, and you'll be all right. Good-by, my boy!"

Robby touched the proffered hand. "Can I say good-by to—to everybody?"

"Sure! Go right ahead, only don't rub it in, or some fellow who'll be on his back yet for six months will take a shot at you."

Commerford went away laughing, but his humor was lost on Jockey Robertson, who was now confronted with the task of saying good-by to a girl he could not find.

For three days, cap in hand, he made his farewell rounds. Each morning he began at a new point and went over the same ground as the day before. And because he could find no trace of the one he sought, he could not bring himself to the actual point of departing. He was pathetically anxious to make sure that he had said good-by to *every-one* and finally the patients grew tired of assuring him that such was the case.

Just before leaving, he screwed up enough courage to ask for and receive his "train orders," so to speak. Porgington gave them, little realizing that he was handing the youngster a schedule for life.

"You mean Miss Wendell? The one that got fired? Oh, gosh, I don't know! She passed by here yesterday and asked about you. I told her you'd gone. I thought you had. Try Gilder's Café on Forty-ninth Street. If she aint there, they can tell you. But say, listen, kid: You remember what the Doc' told you about keeping away from horses? Well, I'll tell you the same thing about Janes. They'll throw you just as quick and a lot harder. Take my tip, and lay off!"

"Yes sir," said Robby. "Much obliged."

THE roar of the outside world terrified him. The current of life seemed moving like a cataract, and he could only cling along its edges—dazed, weak, uncomprehending. How he ever managed to reach the crowded caldron of downtown New York, he never knew—nor how he located Gilder's, the incandescent splendor of which kept him loitering outside the door for the first night. Once he saw a cloaked figure emerge under escort, and he caught a note of laughter that sent him stumbling forward. But a taxi bore her away, and he stood at the corner, uncertain and troubled, watching the retreating cab as it vanished into the darkness.

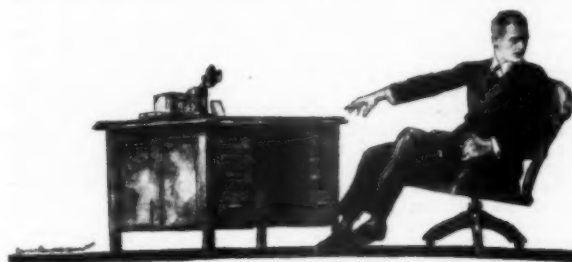
The next night and the next, he sat at a table, toying with undesired food, and watching the long program of entertainment unfold. Broken-down opera singers, ex-stars of vaudeville, performers who frankly identified themselves as "lost causes"—all of them laughing it off at Gilder's. The entertainment exceeded in opulence anything that Robby had ever seen or dreamed of, but it lacked the guiding star for which his vision was focused.

On the third night he managed to stammer a description to the girl who checked his hat. "Oh, I know who you mean!" she answered. "Cute little blonde. Lotta pep and no brakes. No, she aint here no more. Jumped the job a coupla nights ago. Try Weiler's Agency, upstairs around the corner. Most of the talent books there."

While his money lasted, Jockey Robertson



# You may be slipping, too—



and you may  
not know it

**A**MONG THE MEN who have enrolled for the Alexander Hamilton Institute are 32,000 presidents and business heads. Here is the story of one of them which is rather unusual.

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"I have been slipping," he exclaimed. "For some months I have been conscious of it. Conditions have changed in business since I began; problems come up that need something more than merely rule-of-thumb experience. I've got to have someone helping me here, and the easiest way to get really reliable help, I guess, is to take on your experts as my private guides and advisors."

We say this story is unusual. Why? Because he was slipping *and* knew it. Thousands are slipping

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4. The man who knows only one department of business. He may be a good salesman, but if he knows nothing of accounting, banking, costs, factory and office management, and corporation finance, he will be a salesman always. He may be a good accountant, and never reach beyond the accounting department. The man at the top must know *something about everything.* *The Institute can help that man.*

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followed the trail as best he could, but it seemed that he was always just a lap behind. Gradually it was borne home on him that life was a good deal like a race-track. Ahead of him a phantom figure was "out in front" setting a pace that he could not follow. And he was in the ruck of the field, overweighted and outrun. Many a time in the old days he had faced such a condition, and had bided his time, reasoning that it was a long way to the wire, and in the final sweep down the stretch, many a flying leader weakens and comes back to his field. Therein lay Robby's only chance, and he divined it with a sort of blind instinct. Often he had been able to sense the exact conditions under which a thoroughbred would run his race, and he had handled the animal accordingly, rushing him out front, or rating him well in reserve until the right moment came. Now, in some dim way, the boy comprehended the position that had been allotted to him in the Handicap of Life. Never again would he be up among the pace-setters, those who led the way from pole to pole. He was an outsider, a thousand-to-one shot—doomed to take the dust of the field from start to stretch, and then if he could, come up from behind in an eleventh-hour finish.

Meanwhile there was the immediate problem of what to do, and this was settled for him by the Information Kid, famous young king of the hustlers. The latter bumped into Robby at the entrance to the Claridge.

"May I be set down for life!" apologized the Kid. "Boy, I'm glad to see you! How's tricks?"

Robby hesitated.

"Never mind," said the Kid quickly. "I withdraw the question. Let's go in here and put on the nose bags."

The Information Kid had a warm heart and a shattered bank-roll. The condition was chronic. Over twin plates of ham and eggs, the threads of destiny were spun.

"I'm headin' for Canada," said the Kid, "and you might just as well come along. I'll stake you to a mount."

"'Fraid I aint strong enough for the saddle," said Robby.

The Kid grinned. "This horse is named Pullman," he explained. "Nice track, and you can sleep while he runs. I bet on the others, but this is the only one I ride. Woodbine opens next week, and from then on you get a change of scenery every seven days."

"Would I see lots of towns, lots of people? Could I go to places after work?"

The Information Kid shot a quick glance at Robby, and then looked away. "Oh, sure!" he comforted. "You've been on that circuit before, Robby, but I guess you've forgotten. I'll get you a job with one of the stables, and you can rub horses for a while until your strength comes back."

"Yes sir," said Robby. "I'm much obliged."

THAT was how Jockey Robertson, with everything gone save a vision, gravitated back to the race-tracks to become one of that colorful army of ragged gypsies who follow the bangtails from pillar to post, and learn to live on a doughnut and a laugh. Technically, he became what is termed a "swipe," one of those sweater-clad unhonored "knights of the rag" who feed and water and rub equine winners all season, and then are dismissed at the rim of winter, a thousand miles from home, and with a hole in either shoe.

Robertson was twenty years old before he won the distinction of a sobriquet, and it came about under circumstances that definitely shaped his subsequent career.

"Fast-track" McGovern was very superstitious, and would never start a horse unless the sky was cloudless and the track

perfect. Usually he played in extraordinary luck, but he was always fearful of "Jonahs," and one day he overheard the Information Kid say to a sad-faced youngster in a ragged suit:

"Cheer up, Robby—you look like nine days' rain!"

McGovern's suspicions were aroused immediately, and the more he studied this unknown Robby of the shadowed face and somber eyes, the more alarmed he became. In Ontario, the first person McGovern saw when he alighted from the train was Robby, and shortly thereafter it began to rain. When the horses moved on to Windsor, the same thing happened; and again at Hamilton.

McGovern sent for Robby.

"Boy," said he, "where you goin' next?"

"Kempton Park, sir."

"How much you figure on makin' there?"

"Might make a hundred dollars, sir?"

McGovern sighed and reached for his wallet. "Here's five hundred," said he. "You go to Mexico!"

Robby obeyed, and McGovern encountered fair weather at Kempton Park. Somehow the story spread from one track to another, and it grew always in the telling, until it reached the point where the boy was elevated, willy-nilly, to a unique position in the realm of the runners. Small wonder that he came to believe in the powers attributed to him, and to behave accordingly.

Thus Robert Miguel Robertson became "Robby the Rainmaker," pal of Pluvius and caller of the clouds. He was the nemesis of the fair-weather gentry, and the patron saint of all those who owned battle-scarred campaigners fitted by nature to run best in the mud. You see, it worked both ways. There were those who bribed him to stay away, and those who paid him to remain. For a while he was a dizzy weather-vane, spinning in whichever way the financial wind blew strongest, but eventually his natural sympathies charted his course. He abandoned climatic blackmail in favor of a more legitimate, if less lucrative, procedure.

On all race-tracks there are owners and trainers of reduced circumstances who cling fondly to horses that have seen their best days. These equine meal-tickets are principally affected by "dicky" legs and bad feet. In this respect they are not unlike veteran police officers who, after years of pounding the hard sidewalks, complain mournfully that their "dogs" are giving out.

"Weather clear, track fast," means nothing to the Gloomy Georges of the sport of kings. What they desire—nay, more, what they most urgently need—is a *soft* track, and the softer the better! They are the mud-hounds of the industry, the slop-anointed sons of Pluvius, the stormy petrels of the turf! And they fit into the mystic scheme of life only when the sky is dark, the wind is in the air, and there is "soup" upon the ground! To all such bad-weather entries, Robby became a patron saint and master advocate, pleading their cause before the bar of the Eternal Judge.

His usual perch was at the quarter-pole, facing the blue line of the distant Mexican mountains and the parched yellow borderland that stretched between. Faith beat in his bosom, and this was his prayer:

"Lord, gimme a muddy track for my pals! Mud-horses waitin' in the barns, and they want their chance! Go way, sunshine! Go way, fast track! Lil' cloud grow big! Big cloud cover the sky! Day grow dark and wind grow strong! It's Robby callin'! Rain! . . . Rain! . . . C'mon, you rain!"

Sometimes his prayer was answered, and he went around collecting his commissions from Poverty Row. More frequently he pleaded in vain, for he was now in Baja California, which has its own gods, and it appeared that Jupiter Pluvius was growing

daily more hard of hearing. Robby stuck manfully to his task, but gradually the parched earth grew hard and caked, the sky a bowl of unflecked turquoise, merciless, unfathomable.

His cry of "Lil' cloud grow big!" now drew only mockery from fellow rail-birds, and a certain sense of the futility of his existence began to assail him. He felt as weak and helpless as on that day when a honey-haired girl had stolen into his room and kissed him back to life. And again he felt her presence close at hand. Even as he wilted, there bloomed within him a recrudescence of her spirit. She seemed near, so very near! He could sense her nearness, even as he sometimes sensed the approach of rain.

Particularly was this true when he lay at night on a stable cot looking through the open door at the star-studded vault of heaven—silver spangles on purple plush, and below, the twinkling lights of Mexicana, frontier haven of the hardened, America's last pot-hole of iniquity! The lights seemed to be beckoning, beckoning to little Robby the Rainmaker, and he wondered why.

Down there lay the muddiest track of all! The Damnation Handicap was in progress, and the logical favorite was "out in front." A girl, who at twenty years had seen it all! Still fair as a flower, yet steeped in the wisdom of the lost, "Mexicana Nell" sat perched on the club bar at the Internacional, swinging her rhinestone heels to and fro, and still trying to laugh it off as strangers with shrugs ignored the old-time formula: "Buy me a drink, honey—I'm thirsty!"

And not two miles away, Robby the Rainmaker, moving restlessly in his sleep, murmured his mystic prayer: "Lil' cloud grow big! . . . Big cloud cover the sky! . . . C'mon, you rain!"

**C**LOSE to each other as they were, Robby the Rainmaker would never have found the one he sought, and this story would never have been written, had Destiny left it to the boy's initiative.

It took a tidal wave, hundreds of miles long and irresistible in its suction, to snatch Robby up bodily, and propel him toward the particular track where Nell Wendell was leading her field through the mud. The tidal wave developed on New Year's Eve, when all along the Mexican border, from Juarez to "Old Town," a reckless torrent of humanity, outbourn from their land of amendments, swept across the international boundary for the express purpose of doing everything they had been told at home they should not do.

They crossed on foot, in motors and by special trains—a rebellious hegira on folly bound, determined to indulge to the full all the joys of drunken abandon, while they applied a hundred thousand thumbs to a collective nose and handed their beloved Uncle Sam the well-known razzberry!

What a night! What an illuminating commentary on the weakness of our conventional bonds! What a striking illustration of the old truth: "We strive ever after that which is forbidden, and desire the things which are denied us!"

There seems to be just so much mischief in the human make-up, and the more tightly it is bottled up, the more certainly the cork will fly out some day with a rebellious bang! And it certainly was released on this particular New Year's Eve.

The wave reached its crest in Baja California, where a race-track already held its colorful thousands, where the Monte Carlo Inn catered to the followers of Bacchus and Chance, and they could bring their own Venus; and where within easy reach lay Mexicana, *ultima Thule* of frontier towns—a honky-tonk entrance to hell itself!

To Robby the Rainmaker, youthful race-



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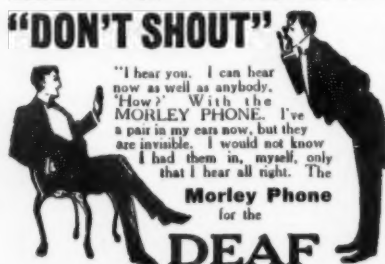
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track derelict, whose intelligence was still in the convalescent stage, the night was so filled with extraordinary scenes, kaleidoscopic crosscuts of life in the raw, that it was like a dream, too quick and tremendous in its scope for him to comprehend it all, or, afterward, even to remember. But here and there fragments stood out in bold relief—high-lights of a nocturnal twelve-ring circus with the lid off.

First, he stood in a crowded, smoke-filled madhouse, trying to grasp the significance of eighty gambling tables running full blast in a single room! Roulette, keno, écarté, monte—anything you wanted—and a crowd at every table! Sixty dealers working for the house, twenty running independently. The droning cry of the dice men, who never stop talking: "All r-r-right! Lay it down, boys, and maybe you'll pick it up! . . . There's one man gone away happy! . . . Who's next? He's shootin'. Five's the point. . . . Three to two he don't five! All r-r-right—comin' up!"

Delirium in the very air! The clink of thousands of silver dollars, the blare of jazz from the dance-floor beyond—noise, confusion, reckless abandon! Perspiring attendants charging through the crowd with trays piled with the house winnings!

In a corner, the Information Kid was running his own bank, and breaking, among others, Don Santo Quezada, the portly and bibulous alcalde of Mexicana.

"Tap!" said the señor, and saw his last dollar vanish. "Buena!" he grunted. "The night, she is young! I go now, but in ten minutes I come back, and I show you who's bust then!"

"Atta boy!" grinned the Kid. "I'm dealin' a snap, señor, and there's no limit while the roll lasts. Come and take it—if you can!"

And presently Don Santo was back, trailed by a *mozo* who carried a sack of silver dollars on his shoulder. He put a marker on the king and bet the sack. The king showed on the first turn. The señor had busted the "house."

The Information Kid stood up and stretched his arms. "Here, señor," he invited, "take my chair and make yourself comfortable. The bank's yours, and everything that goes with it!"

Then he went outside, ducked his head in a water-trough, and set out to look for a girl with green jade earrings and a red dress. Robby trailed him through dining-rooms and across dance-floors into a *salon* reserved for ladies and their escorts.

HERE emotional femininity had taken complete leave of its senses. Stars of the stage and screen, women to whom drawing-rooms were not unknown, matrons and debutantes, wives, mothers, daughters, stood crushed five deep against a mahogany rail behind which eight bartenders, working elbow to elbow, strove in vain to appease the clamor.

A slim brunette in white satin, a girl still in her teens, edged gleefully out of the mass, hugging a champagne bottle. She tripped, and fell into the arms of a blond giant in a dinner jacket.

"Sank oo!" she lisped. "Le's kill it!" He accepted the suggestion and the bottle gratefully, announcing that he was either Mr. Texas of Jones, or Mr. Jones of Texas, and damned if he could remember which!

"Sall right! 'Sall right!" she assured. "But 'member zis! Wha' I say t'night—don't go in the mornin'. Wanna step? C'mon!"

Only the dealers remained sober—cool, thin-faced, impassive men, in green eye-shades, sitting behind écarté tables strung along the wall, and methodically ramming currency through a slit into the locked cash-box for which they held no key.

Wild yells greeted the announcement that the border would remain open until one

o'clock. Revelry mounted, and the New Year was ushered in by vociferous thousands who no longer knew who they were, nor what it was all about.

The ebb set in at ten minutes to one, when a small army of chauffeurs and taxi-drivers, under instruction from the border authorities, came charging into the building, looking for those who had hired them, and prepared to carry off rebellious patrons by main force if necessary. Arguments and fist-fights sprang up all over the place as uniformed rescuers tried to identify their charges. Women were picked up bodily, their escorts hauled out from under tables, and the rush for the border began. In the last few minutes it was a stampede. Chauffeurs who couldn't locate their proper customers, grabbed the nearest they could find, threw them into cars, and headed full speed for the international boundary—that non-existent line that separates Fiddle-dee-dee from Fiddle-dee-dum.

Special traffic-officers, deputy sheriffs and Federal rangers guarded the American highways and stopped all cars long enough to ascertain the condition of the occupants. If the driver was sober, the order to drive on was given. Otherwise they were ordered to one side and an armed sentry posted over them with instructions to keep them there until they sobered up. All the way to San Diego the roadside was dotted with the dark outlines of cars filled with a tangle of unconscious occupants whose arms and legs protruded from windows, with a grinning soldier standing guard over all.

Thus the tidal wave receded, bearing back with it to sanity and safety those who possessed the wealth that purchases folly. Left behind in the muddy débris were the less fortunate, those who lacked for one reason or another the power to escape. They were the "mud-horses" of life, professional performers on a track that amateurs had invaded for one night only.

Robby the Rainmaker had fled from the Monte Carlo Inn when the night was still young, tormented by a beefy individual who insisted on telling the boy's story to maudlin merrymakers.

"We was on a half-mile track in Florida, an' I had a lot o' beetles 'at would only run in the slop. So I gives this son of Noah twenty bucks to do his stuff, an', s'help me Gawd, if a cloudbust didn't wash out the track, and we had to cancel the meet! Believe me, we put a blue flame under that kid's pants! We sure run him ragged!"

Robby fled, pursued by gales of laughter. Outside, he wavered indecisively, and then recognized fellow-hustlers who were heading toward a line of dilapidated flivvers whose Mexican drivers were ballyhooing for the main event.

"Hi, yi, yi! Vamos por Mejicana! Mucho fandango! Muchas chiquitas bonitas! Everybody come! Hell of a time! You betcha que sí! Vamos! C'mon! Son of a gun!"

Some reveler took Robby by the arm and shoved him into a car; others piled in on top of him, and presently they were bumping along in the Mexican moonlight toward a little town that was the last of its kind on the American continent.

Hangtown and Whisky Hill are gone; Dawson has been reborn, and the Barbary Coast is closed forever; but at Mexicana the ghosts of dead honky-tonkers had taken their stand, and the old régime lived on. Saloons still stood shoulder to shoulder, their open doors framing girls in short skirts and vivid hair-ribbons; discordant brass still blared its invitation, punctuated by the cry of the Black Jack dealer, "Hit me and take it!" and the warning call of the night managers: "Go as far as you like, boys, but pay your bills!"

At one end of the crowded street stood the Internacional, a structure that covered an entire block, surmounted by an incandescent owl whose scarlet eye winked wisely

all night long. Perhaps it was winking at the little church on the hill, outlined against the stars—the church of Padre Sombrero, who was a man of parts, and prayed always that Mexicana might repent of its sins before it was too late. Instead of which an inscrutable Designer had ordained that this extraordinary community should crown its wildest night with a masterstroke of irony.

For when it seemed that Mexicana had already reached the highest peak of crazy revelry, a pop-eyed individual staggered into the nearest dance-hall and howled above the din: "Hey, where the hell's the fire department? Yer church is burnin' down!"

He reeled off down the street, spreading the alarm as he went, and behind him the stampede began. Mexicana's fire department consisted of the entire population, and they responded *en masse*. Bartenders led the rush, followed by gamblers, musicians, dance-hall girls and even the painted women of the stockade, all hurrying up the hill toward a blazing edifice of God.

But it was too late; the little church was doomed. Padre Sombrero, tall and gaunt, identified by the enormous hat that accounted for his pseudonym, had rescued the Sacred Host, and now stood off to one side, arms folded protectively across his chest, dark eyes contemplating the sacrificial pyre. Some of the early arrivals had dashed in and snatched up what they could—and the flare of the flames revealed amazing incongruities: a tin-eared bartender holding a statue of Our Lady; "Hula Sue" waving triumphantly a collection box; and Monte Baxter, night manager of the Internacional, standing guard over a baptismal font!

The treasures were deposited in a pile on the ground. There was no water, and no way of checking the flames. Only the isolated position of Padre Sombrero's edifice saved all Mexicana from destruction.

AS though bent on striking a last blow at its archenemy, the little church, writhing in its death agony, ignited the power poles near by. The wires fell to the ground, short-circuited and plunged the town into darkness, relieved only by the crimson torch on the hill.

Confusion—curses—wild hilarity! This was their reward for trying to save the Lord's property! They had been divinely double-crossed!

"T'hell with it!" shouted a voice. "The higher she burns, the better! C'mon back, and we'll dance in the street!"

The suggestion was cheered from a thousand throats. A blazing church to serve as a substitute lighting system for a final bacchanale. The best joke in the history of Mexicana! "On with the dance! Let joy be unconfined!"

Back down the hill they hastened, laughing, shouting, embracing, intoxicated by the thrill of this supreme jest. The laugh was on the Lord! The single street became a foaming bedlam, a sacrilegious whirlpool—Dante's Inferno illumined by the flickering red glare of Padre Sombrero's burning house of God!

It was into this scene of sacrilege and horror that Destiny ushered Robby the Rain-maker, a dazed youth with only half a mind, seeking a girl with only half a soul. The boy was deposited in front of the Internacional just as the inevitable fight started. Some one had struck somebody else, and that was all that was necessary. Each man squared off and walloped his nearest brother.

The *mélée* spread, and Robby was borne down the street in a tide of struggling figures. He tried to escape and couldn't. Men fought silently or otherwise, according to their nationalities: bull-throated Irishmen roaring their wrath, quick-fisted Americans cursing enthusiastically, dark-visaged Latins sputtering unintelligible oaths. A giant

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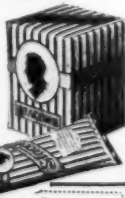
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Cornish sailor, with a pipe still in his mouth and blood streaming down his face, winked good-naturedly at Robby, swung a tremendous fist at the boy's head, missed, and fell prone on his face. He picked himself up, still with the pipe in his mouth, took his bearings, and headed happily back into "rough water."

Mexicana's police force, a dozen pudgy figures in olive drab, had located the center of the disturbance. The fight, as usual, had started over a girl. Her arms were still locked tightly around the neck of a young American, a mining engineer from the hills, whom the police were trying vainly to drag in the direction of the *cuartel*. The struggle had torn the girl's dress from her shoulders, but her grip remained unbroken. The moon-

light revealed her—a storm-beaten, disheveled nymph desperately defending an unknown Galahad.

Some one cried above the din: "Hang on to him, girlie—we're all for you! C'mon, boys—that's Mexicana Nell, the only square-shooter in the dump! Give them cops the bum's rush!"

Robby recognized the voice of the Information Kid. More than that, he recognized in this white-faced, scarlet-lipped favorite of Mexicana, the lost mistress of his soul!

"Miss Nellie!" he cried, and stumbled forward, fighting as he went.

(Events now happen still more swiftly in this most attractive of all Mr. Beaumont's stories. Be sure to read it in the next, the September, issue.)

## BITTER APPLES

(Continued from page 65)

"Try out these two. One of them has good movie stuff in it."

He expanded under the warmth of this kindness. He liked her; he would have liked her even if she hadn't praised him—even if there was still a grain of suspicion in the back of his head, relative to the locket. Perhaps something in his voice or gesture or expression had warned her. Perhaps she was afraid of Henley, who had known Wyncote and was always recounting the fact. Supposing she had loved his father, whether as Wyncote or as Jarvis; why give it an evil slant?

The locket was bulletined, but was never claimed.

THERE now began the oldest game in the world, this side of Eve's query: will you have a bite? The actress became an interested spectator. She knew this game better than any other; for years she had lived and played it; rarely a nuance escaped her. The boy was in love with Belinda, though the truth hadn't yet been unveiled to his consciousness. His following eye was enough for Mrs. Channing, his diffidence, his gayety when Belinda was kind, and his dullness when she wasn't.

Belinda evidently saw some attraction in the first officer, and she walked and danced with him frequently. Then suddenly she would swoop down upon her victim, sing for him and enchant him. The enchantment an accomplished fact, she would hide away to the pouter-breast in brass buttons.

Cruel little devil, thought Mrs. Channing. She knew; she had been one herself.

One day she said to Wyncote: "You're going to be a writer, so I'll give you out of my store of experience. When a woman is pursued, she is cruel; when she pursues, she is kind. When a man refuses to pursue her, she wants to know why. Remember this when you write a love-story."

He got no lesson from this, not accepting it as applied to his case. He wasn't running after Belinda; but she was running after that damfool of a first officer.

At Madeira, Belinda went ashore with the first officer, after having tentatively promised Wyncote that she would go with him. Mrs. Channing caught him on the rebound, and got him out of the dumps by lugging him into town herself and inwardly fuming at Belinda. Here was a clean, handsome boy that any young woman might be glad to run around with. What was the matter with the little devil? She had to admit that there was a queer streak in Belinda; she prospected continually for it, but without success.

It was the usual tourist excursion, with bullock-carts and toboggans and cable-railways and unripe wine. There was this advantage over the ordinary tourist: in the office *The Four Winds* looked the private yacht, and accordingly her passengers gave themselves airs and were prodigal with their

express checks. If somebody had presented Diogenes with the plug hat of his times, you never would have heard of his tub.

Wyncote did not enjoy himself, though he acted cleverly enough to fool his companion. Any man over thirty and under fifty would have fallen in love with Mrs. Channing that afternoon. But Wyncote was twenty-four, and no matter where his glance roved, Belinda never came into the range of it.

Most of the party returned to the ship for dinner. *The Four Winds* was to sail at midnight. Belinda did not appear at dinner, and questions did not bring to light where she was. So Wyncote engaged a bum-boat to carry him to the mole, whence he wandered about the dimly lit streets, worried and distressed. Something might have happened. In a way he was surety for her safety; but for him, she would still be singing in the cabaret.

He was peering into an alley to ascertain where it led, when, as it seemed to him, some one struck him a violent blow on the chin. He whirled about defensively, but saw no one. He ran his hand across his chin—wet; it began to smart. Then he understood. Some Portuguese thug had thrown a knife at him and had missed the jugular by an inch or so. Very sensibly he took to his heels and ran all the way to the mole. He stanchd the blood with his handkerchief and returned to the ship.

As he came under the ladder light, he saw Belinda, her eyes wide with horror.

"What has happened?" she cried, seizing him by the arm. "You are all bloody!"

For a moment he thought she was going to faint. "Nothing serious," he affirmed. "Some holdup threw a knife at me; but all I need is a wash and a bit of court-plaster. When did you get back?"

"I had dinner on the bridge. Didn't they tell you?"

"No. I'll toddle down to the doctor."

On the way he wished the thug's aim had been a little more accurate—an inch more.

Sometime after midnight those of the crew off watch were getting into their bunks in the forepeak.

"Hey, Steve, you dropped sumpin'!"

Stefani stooped for the knife that had slipped from his pocket.

"That's a new one. Where's your ol' sticker you're allus honin'?"

"I threw it away," said Stefani, smiling.

### Chapter Nine

WHEN Belinda awoke the next morning, she seemed to be possessed by a fury of haste. She had tried to set her awakening time at six, but nature had declined to be interfered with. Her desperate haste was purposeful. She must get through with her affair before the others were up and about. She saw through the porthole that



they had run into rain. So much the better; the deck would be clear.

She came upon Stefani as he lashed the chair-backs to the deck-house rail. He was in dripping oilskins.

"Stefani!"

The man turned and touched his cap. She approached closely and took hold of his arm, her gray eyes flashing with anger.

"Let it be understood, once and for all," she said, "that you are under my orders." Stefani smiled and shrugged slightly. "You tried to kill him last night."

"The Signorina is mistaken." He spoke Italian.

"You lie! Giuseppe told me that you could throw a knife like a bullet. If you kill him, as God hears us, I'll kill you!" She spoke Italian too, so that Stefani could not say that he did not quite understand her.

"The Signorina is Sicilian this morning," he said.

"So much so that I warn you not to meddle."

"I am under Giuseppe's orders, signorina," said Stefani, respectfully but firmly. "You were to torture him. All that I can see is that you are mad over the first officer—that imbecile!"

"You fool, that is part of the torture, to make him think I love the officer! Remember, if ever he is missing, I'll denounce you. These four months were given me to work my will."

"To save him? Your American blood, signorina, is pale; but you are still our lady. You shall have your way; but he shall not escape. So long as he continues this voyage, I stand aside. But once he returns to New York, I strike. You with the officer, while he makes love to the actress! I know what I see. An eye for an eye. Giuseppe was weak enough to bow to you. So long as we are on this ship, I too will bow to you. But in New York!" He made a gesture with his hand; it was far more menacing than words.

HE turned to his hempen twine and continued lashing the chairs. The barometer was falling, and there would be rough weather before an hour was gone.

The lack of servility in Stefani convinced Belinda that she was being played with by the medieval minds which hemmed her in. All along she had had a vague suspicion of it; now she was assured. Joseph loved her; and it was only because he loved her that Wyncote was alive. The power of the man, poor as he was! He had got both her and Stefani aboard; how, she would never know. Had Wyncote been killed last night, the deed would have been attributed to the Portuguese. Stefani would have had a marvelous alibi.

Hating Wyncote with all her soul, she must save him. Irony! Not through pity, not through mercy, but because there was in her that which abhorred bloodshed. She had been hypnotized by tradition, by Joseph's exposition of it—hypnotized by sudden catastrophe, too. It had been easy to call the Sicilian from its dormant state; but now it was slowly retreating to its dormancy, and she was only half-hearted in her efforts to maintain the fire.

But a caress from Wyncote! She wished that something would happen to her, an accident; she did not want to live. What was there to live for? Her ambition was dead; she could not revive it. She could sing, yes—all the mechanism was there; but the soul was gone out of her.

She hurried forward and took shelter temporarily under the bridge. Through the increasing blur of rain she could see the whitecaps racing down from the northeast. The boat was lifting groggily.

A notion entered her head, and she straightway enacted it. She climbed down the ladder to the waist and mounted the

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bow, boring her way to the forefoot. There was here nothing but a pipe rail, and so she had no protection from either wind or spray, the one growing in velocity and the other in volume. She clutched the rail. Rain, spray and wind; she became filled with strange exultation. One old comber broke, and she was smothered for a moment; but her grip on the rail was unshaken. If there was in her head the notion of being washed overboard, Fate was not prepared to acquiesce; there were other deeds upon Belinda White's ticket that had not yet been canceled.

THE men on the bridge saw her; and so did Wyncote, who had just come up from breakfast to have a look at the weather. He did not recognize Belinda, but he recognized the figure of a woman. He was down the ladder in two jumps, and across the waist in three. He reached Belinda as another green one broke over. To save himself, Wyncote automatically threw his arms around Belinda, forcing loose her grip. The two of them toppled and were catapulted against the starboard rail. They lay there, half stunned for a moment. As Wyncote got to his feet and began to lift Belinda, the first officer appeared, angry and frightened; and the two men got her to safety.

"Good heavens, Miss White," cried the sailor, "what were you doing out there in this kind of weather? It isn't safe at all, and growing worse all the while."

"I'm all right," she said. "Nothing would have happened if Mr.—er—Carey hadn't pulled me from the rail." She began to laugh. Her depression had been sloshed out of her.

"You limp a bit," said Wyncote, scowling at the sailor, who scowled back.

"Shin hit something. But I tell you I'm all right. It was great fun."

"It was mighty dangerous fun," said the sailor. "Don't try it again, please."

"Better go and change at once," advised the landlubber.

"That's the first sensible thing I've heard," she said. As she started off, she began to limp again.

The sailor on one side and the landlubber on the other,—each considering the other a superfluity,—they conducted the little rebel to the cabin companion, down which she disappeared.

"Your court-plaster has washed off," said the sailor, for the want of something better to say.

Wyncote's hand went to his chin. "The salt will be good for it."

"Came near scragging you, I should say."

"A miss is as good as a mile. How about a peg?"

"Too early for me, sir." Pretty decent sort, but he was wasting his time with Miss White, was the sailor's private comment.

DOWN in his cabin Wyncote wondered at the mood which had lured Belinda into the bow. In a blow he could have understood; it made one feel something of a conqueror to stand at the forefoot in a high wind. But in the rain too! He couldn't reach that definitely. Lots of courage, but thoughtless. And just as lovely bedraggled as she was in trim. A queer girl.

He eyed his jaw in the mirror and laid a fresh piece of sticking plaster on the cut.

Over the way, Belinda ruefully inspected an ugly bruise just below her knee. She was a fool; but she felt better mentally. He was a fool too, grabbing her that way. She could have got back all right if they had let her be.

His arms had actually been around her, and she hadn't thought to strike him! Would he recollect the fact that he had for a moment held her in his embrace? True, it had been a protective, not a sentimental action. And now he would consider that he had saved her life! Well, she would be kind to him, sinistinely kind; but if ever he touched her possessively!

She must get rid of Stefani. That must be done. So long as he remained aboard, he would present a menace. Wyncote should never go ashore alone again; she would have to go with him. Stefani would not throw knives while she was close to the receiving end. What a web she was in! She turned her face to her pillow and lay there silently.

But she did not get rid of Stefani, who, with infernal prescience, read her thoughts. Upon the first opportunity that offered, he told her that if she worked for his discharge, she would learn that he had friends in all the Mediterranean ports. She should have her four months; then the results would be checked up.

Belinda knew that this meant but one thing: Wyncote was to die by violence because Joseph had sworn it.

"And if you warn him!" said Stefani. "You are of high Sicilian blood, marchesa; otherwise you yourself would have paid the debt. If you will not pay it, we shall."

"I promise not to warn him."

She had sworn a solemn, rather dreadful oath at a time when her soul had been in torment, torn with grief and love and hate. She now regretted it; but having uttered the oath, she would follow through. An eye for

an eye, a tooth for a tooth: but her own interpretation.

Wyncote loved her, or at least was next door to it. But she did not want the confession till she was positive that this love was rooted in his soul. Then she would show Joseph what a futile thing violence was. . . .

Monte Carlo, Naples, Corfu, Athens, Constantinople, Alexandria, Cairo, Port Said: she went with Wyncote everywhere, ate at the same table, saw the same sights; except when he retired, he was never beyond the call of her voice. On the ship, however, her smiles went to the first officer.

Stefani witnessed these maneuvers and understood precisely what they signified. He laughed silently.

## Chapter Ten

BY the time *The Four Winds* had slipped into the Red Sea, everybody on board had written down Belinda as a coquette, not cruel exactly, but playful, like a well-fed cat—say, an Angora, the best of the breed. She had alienated all sympathy, but not one tittle of interest. She was the subject of conversation when absent, the object of secret admiration when present. She had so many gifts, of beauty, of intellect, that they were disposed to grant her the right to break as many masculine hearts as she pleased, but hoped that some day the boom-crang would perform its duty.

For Wyncote they had sympathy but not a tittle of interest. His submission was too tame. They saw a handsome, muscular young fellow with a timid soul. For in the eyes of his observers he was outwardly the type Lochinvar and inwardly Yellow-heels.

But Wyncote's code would not permit him to declare his love, even though he wore his heart upon his sleeve. In the first place, he was Oliver Wyncote's son; in the second place, he was indirectly the cause of her being on this ship. She was alone; till she returned to her environment, her former associations, his lips were sealed. The true lover is always diffident, but that does not indict him with cowardice. He was no more a coward than she was a coquette. How little truth we are able to deduce from what we see!

Besides, he was afraid, not of Belinda but of himself. This situation was not normal. Notions he did not like came into his head; and spurn them as he would, they returned to plague him. Supposing the Jarvis taint hypnotized him? Supposing he loved her from that angle: to win her and then to

## College, Vaudeville, Fiction

There is no one else among the young men of the magazines who, in the space of so few years, has accomplished so much in the way of excellent fiction-writing as Walter De Leon. And his is not a name assumed for writing purposes. Mr. De Leon is a graduate of the University of California. While there, he interested himself in college theatricals, and on graduation the step into the theater was taken with readiness and ease.

For some years Mr. De Leon was an actor in vaudeville, then turned to the writing of acts for other vaudevillians. Later he wrote a "straight" story, and it was immediately snapped up. Since that initial success in fiction, he has confined himself to story-writing. Many of his stories have appeared in these pages, and another tale, entitled "THE GREEN COMPLEX," is scheduled to appear in an early number.

lose all interest in her? He had all the sensations of the lover, protective and possessive, interlarded with stern promises to himself. But was Belinda the woman he wanted all his life? He was insanely jealous of the first officer. But hadn't he been quite as jealous when he had fallen in love with the Follies girl? Was this sensation any different from the first? What really worried him was the fear that he might belong to the order of progressive lovers, anchorless love, and all that—like his father.

Literary observations. He was putting himself in the mirror, as he would at some future day put sundry characters. Without being aware of it, he was practicing. And why not? If he couldn't translate himself into terms of expression, how could he do the same with an imaginary character?

Belinda was sometimes cruel; and in these moments he conjured her in his power and imagined how he would punish her for her ruthlessness. Then, if she happened to be kind, he reviled himself, and as a penance let her do with him as she willed.

Manhood develops slowly or is shocked into being. Wyncote had not yet risen from the blow he had received; he was metaphorically upon his hands and knees. A direct purpose, a direct responsibility, not negative as in his self-established protectorate over Belinda, would have served him well. He moved, but got nowhere; he thought, but in a circle. He was young.

And day by day Stefani sharpened his new knife on the carpenter's whetstone.

AT Colombo, Wyncote and Belinda took rickshaws out to the Gall Face Hotel and had tea; then they wandered down the beach. They came upon an old timber and sat down.

"How soft the air is!" she said, breathing deeply.

"I want to tell you something."

"Let's talk of the sea. I'm in the mood for nothing else."

"But I don't want you to get a wrong notion of me."

She fancied that this prologue was about to lead to a declaration, and she stiffened her body to meet the shock. More and more she felt herself driven inexorably toward the inevitable corner. To arouse his love, to enchain it, and then to annihilate him; and she wasn't sure that she had the stamina to carry through! For how could she enchain his love if she gave nothing? And to give anything was torture equal to any she could bestow. She might play at love at arm's-length; but she found the notion of physical contact utterly repellent to her. His gentleness, his patience, the pathos of his position, which she now began to recognize—all these combined further to intensify her hatred.

"What is it you wish to say to me that's more interesting than watching the sea?"

"I want you to know that I haven't any of that money."

"What money?"—assured that a declaration was not on the way.

"My—father's. I don't want you to think that I could touch a penny of that sort."

He was gazing seaward, diffidently; and so he missed her burning glance. How dared he present to her the information that he possessed ennobling attributes? She rose abruptly and brushed the sand from her skirts.

"What do I care what you do with your money?"

He rose too, his fingers twitching. To take her into his arms and kiss that red mouth ten thousand times!

"Then it does not interest you to know that I am honest?"

"Of course it does!" she was forced to say, though fretfully. "But why spoil a beautiful afternoon in this fashion? Let's go back to town."

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"Very well." But he wished there was some way he could hurt her without losing her; and he would have lost her had he surrendered to the devastating impulse of the moment gone. . . .

That night on board she danced with no one but the first officer. Wyncote hid himself to the bow and smoked many pipes.

Mrs. Channing hunted high and low for him, but could not find him. When the dancing was over, however, she captured Belinda and propelled her to the chairs.

"You little devil, sit down," commanded the actress. "I'm going to give you a talking to."

"About what?" asked Belinda.

"A little villain. What are you trying to do to that poor boy?"

"Sailors can take care of themselves."

"You know whom I mean. Either you love him or you hate him for some reason."

Belinda did not jump, but her heart did. She was alarmed at this perspicacity. "Why, I give him more than half my time. He's always under foot. I have to snub him occasionally."

"I like that boy," said Mrs. Channing. "He isn't knowing, presumptuous. He has manner and charm. He's always ashore with you. Do you mind telling me if he ever tried to kiss you?"

"No. He knows he'd better not."

"To know when and when not is a gift. He treats you with the utmost respect; and you often treat him with less consideration than you would a deckhand."

"In heaven's name—" began Belinda, all rebel.

The actress caught her hand in mid-gesture. "You're the most adorable little wretch I've ever laid eyes on. I am old, Linda—old in worldliness, anyhow. I have been trained to observe human emotions. That boy is quite mad about you. But that's something everybody around knows. But the point is, he isn't aware that he shows what he feels."

"Am I to blame?"

"If I didn't like you, I shouldn't care a hang what you did. It seems to me that you are hiding all that is fine in you. Why do you make believe you are shallow? When you do love, it will be with the fury of fire and the loyalty of dogs."

TEARS sprang into Belinda's eyes, tears she made little effort to stem, because of the dark. To throw herself into this understanding woman's arms and cry out her story!

"Thanks," she said, when she was sure of her voice. "If he loves me as you say, let him speak, and I'll put him out of his misery by telling him that I wouldn't marry the last man on earth—just now. What? Tie myself to any man before I've had my fling?"

"Fling? What kind of a fling do you want? Sometimes a fling carries you so far that you can't come back. There are men who wait patiently for flings."

"I understand you perfectly. I meant play. Before I marry a man, I must know him, the peaks and levels of him. I don't purpose, Mrs. Channing, to go on a voyage of discovery."

"And where, my dear, did you learn this sophistry?"

"In a cabaret. I sang for my bread and butter. So I know men."

"But such a trip as this—how could you afford it?" cried the astonished actress.

"It's my fling. All women can at least afford one. Haven't you had yours?"

"Yes. Poor child, if you only knew the cost!"

WYNCOTE remained forward long after midnight. The result of all his cogitations was this: sooner or later he would take Belinda into his arms and kiss her, smother and hurt her with kisses. Let her squirm—she had caused him to squirm enough! If she would let him be, he wouldn't mind so much; but she was always destroying his peace of mind, getting him where he decently couldn't escape and then torturing him. Why? She had given him a shabby turn on the beach that afternoon, when all his courage had been summoned to tell her what he had to tell.

A cabaret singer. Why, he could ostracize her with a word: how she had come upon this ship, with money given her by his own attorney. He could but wouldn't speak this word. The cad wasn't in him. He doubted if his father had ever played the cad. Dishonest though his father had been, of careless morality, he had always been attentive to the mother. No; he wouldn't play the cad.

As he climbed to the promenade deck, he encountered the subject of his troubled thoughts.

"That was you out there?" she asked.

"Yes!"—rather sharply.

"I was wondering. I'm sorry about my abruptness this afternoon. I want some turquoise. Will you take me into town in the morning?"

"I'll be glad to," he said, and cursed his lack of spine. A crook of her finger, and here he was, tagging her heels again. It was odd; he knew exactly what to do, and could not do it. And somewhere on tomorrow's jaunt she would twist his heart in some unexpected manner.

"Good night," she said.

"Good night. Nine o'clock. We sail at two in the afternoon."

Alone in his cabin, his anger returned. Why, she must hold him in utter contempt for the ease with which she handled him! It was useless to attempt to find a legitimate excuse; there wasn't any. That, because of the strange manner by which she had come aboard, he was really her only protector, did not warrant submission to these uncalled-for affronts. He was simply made of putty. Or was he afraid that if he did boil over, the chasm would be too wide ever to bridge?

And who was the woman who had lost that locket? Here was a mystery. The locket was still unclaimed. Was there some one on board who knew who he was? Whenever he thought of the locket, he thought of Mrs. Channing also. Had she ever been on *The Petrel* in the old days? Hadn't she worked near New York before the general exodus to Los Angeles?

The irony of this voyage of forgetfulness! He would have had greater peace of mind in New York, despite the unknown menace. He got into his bunk, but did not sleep.

Across the passage, Belinda also did not sleep. She sat for a long while on the edge of her bunk and stared at the door stonily. He was beginning to bore her. How could she inflict torture upon a man who had no fight in him—who swallowed her affronts meekly? Was his life worth saving? Was he even worth hating? And always there was Stefani watching and waiting, with the

implacable patience of one who has sworn his oath. She was powerless; she could not denounce the man, not even if he took a second step toward murder.

"I begin to see, Joseph," she whispered. "I begin to see!"

She could not kneel and pray; something had taken the gift of prayer out of her.

## Chapter Eleven

"CRIBBAGE?" asked Henley.

Ceylon was dropping astern. The weather was like that of May. The sea offered nothing but the eternal roll, topless and glassy.

There were times when Henley bored Wyncote. He was a fine old chap; but whenever he had two pegs of Scotch under his ample diaphragm, he would grow reminiscent of his former cruise on the boat. But Wyncote forgave him because of the beautiful comradeship he gave to his faded wife. They had gone over the hill into the twilight, but the shadow cast by love was like the afterglow of sunset.

"All right."

They played for half an hour and for two pegs of Scotch, Wyncote merely tasting his. He liked wine—there was something romantic about champagnes and burgundies, and the intoxication was as much mental as physical; but the taste of whisky shot him with shudders.

"As I said the other day," said Henley, as he put the cribbage board away, "I'd like to know what's become of that boy of Wyncote's. Very polite; never got in anyone's way. He and his father—"

The deck-steward looked into the smoke-room. "Military band at Calcutta on the radio!"

"I'm for that," said Wyncote. "Come along, Mr. Henley."

"No; I'll finish my peg," replied Henley regretfully. He liked to talk with this boy. He wished he had the courage to warn him about the way that little chit of a White girl was making a fool of him.

The military band at Calcutta was playing "William Tell," which Wyncote had heard so many times that he could go twenty years without hearing it again. So he stole down to his stuffy cabin for a siesta. He was wearing sandals, and his step was therefore soundless.

As he was about to put his hand on the doorknob, he heard a sound. He listened. He did not mean to incline toward Belinda's door; the action was unconsciously made. Sobs! She was sobbing. What had happened? His heart and all around it seemed to contract, hurtfully. She was crying. He raised his hand to knock, but dropped it, and entered his cabin as silently as he possibly could. Homesick; well, so was he—for the home he was never again to see.

AT Singapore, Wyncote received a letter from Thornden in which the whole affair was gone over, with all those minute details of which only a legal mind would think. In substance Thornden again emphatically denied any complicity in Belinda White's presence on board *The Four Winds*. At the rooming-house where she had lived for but two months, they knew nothing of her past or antecedents or whence she had come. An elderly Italian, whose name was unknown, had been a frequent visitor. It was definite in Thornden's mind that the whole affair suggested blackmail, that the stiletto and the menu had been used merely to excite his interest and to draw him to the cabaret where she sang. There too they knew nothing of her beyond the fact that she had come in alone and asked for a hearing. They had made an opening for her, because she was unusually pretty. Thornden went on to state that he, Wyncote, was the first man

## F. SCOTT FITZGERALD

He is the author of "The Great Gatsby," one of the best selling novels in America today, and of other memorable books. For the next, the September, issue of this magazine, Mr. Fitzgerald has written the most penetrating story of his career.

she had ever spoken to in the restaurant. His father's millions were now beyond the reach of individual touch. The young woman believed that this money was still in his possession. The advice was to acquaint her with the fact that the millions had been permanently disposed of, and then to remark her future actions.

Wyncote gave this sensible letter piece by piece to the wind. He had told Belinda, and she had replied that what he did with his money was nothing to her. Blackmail him? Her actions were anything but those of a blackmailer; and even a country yokel would have discerned that much. That side of the incident was closed. But what about Thornden? Wasn't he trying to save his face? That side of the incident would remain open till he, Wyncote, was back in New York. He decided to ignore the letter. He *knew* Belinda wasn't that kind.

He had run away. Why shouldn't she? In fact, if there was anything like blackmail, it had been perpetrated by Thornden himself: bribing Belinda never to have anything more to do with John Wyncote, and then bringing them together! Here was the kink that absolutely refused to be straightened out: this throwing them together. His theories touched but never encompassed the reason for this anomaly.

THE skipper of *The Four Winds* had once been an irreproachable officer of the line, but the war had speckled him, and he had stepped down to the merchant marine. The shock of having a depth-bomb tear a destroyer from under his feet was not of evanescent character. Since the war he had been remarkably lucky; nowhere had he encountered a situation likely to discover that he had lost his nerve.

The sleek little ship was beating down past the Gilberts, bound for Samoa, when a remarkable thing happened. It cannot be given the term *phenomenon*, because it was one of Nature's casual manifestations at sea: a convulsion under the sea floor.

Nine o'clock at night. The ship did not seem to make any wind; that is, if there was any air stirring, it moved along with the ship at the same rate of speed. A blank night, neither stars nor sea visible, a fog without appreciable moisture.

"Mr. Whitlock," said the skipper to the first officer, "I don't like the looks of things."

"Does look queer, sir. We took the sun at noon; there's no questioning our reckoning. We're not so much as a hair off the course, sir."

"I don't mean that. It's this damned queer roll—seems to be getting higher every minute; and no wind. And the barometer set."

"Yes sir." The first officer glanced at the binnacle and then consulted a chart. "We're dead on our course, sir—nothing to do but carry on."

"Of course!"—fretfully. "The roll is following; that's what bothers me. There's been no weather since we dropped the Philippines. If there was even a rain! We seem to be in the middle of a smoke-belt, and we can't smell the smoke. . . . All hands on deck to stand by for an hour! There's something behind us; I can feel it; and I'm not going to take any chance. Anything near us?"

"An island sixty miles due east. But the chart shows a reef off the port bow, five or six miles. I'll rout out the men, sir."

"But warn them to take it easy. No hurry. Nothing may happen; it's just the feel of things. Tell them to take their positions quietly."

These orders were promptly obeyed. The skipper was a good seaman; his nerves were still obedient to his will. His precautions were those of any sailor entitled to com-



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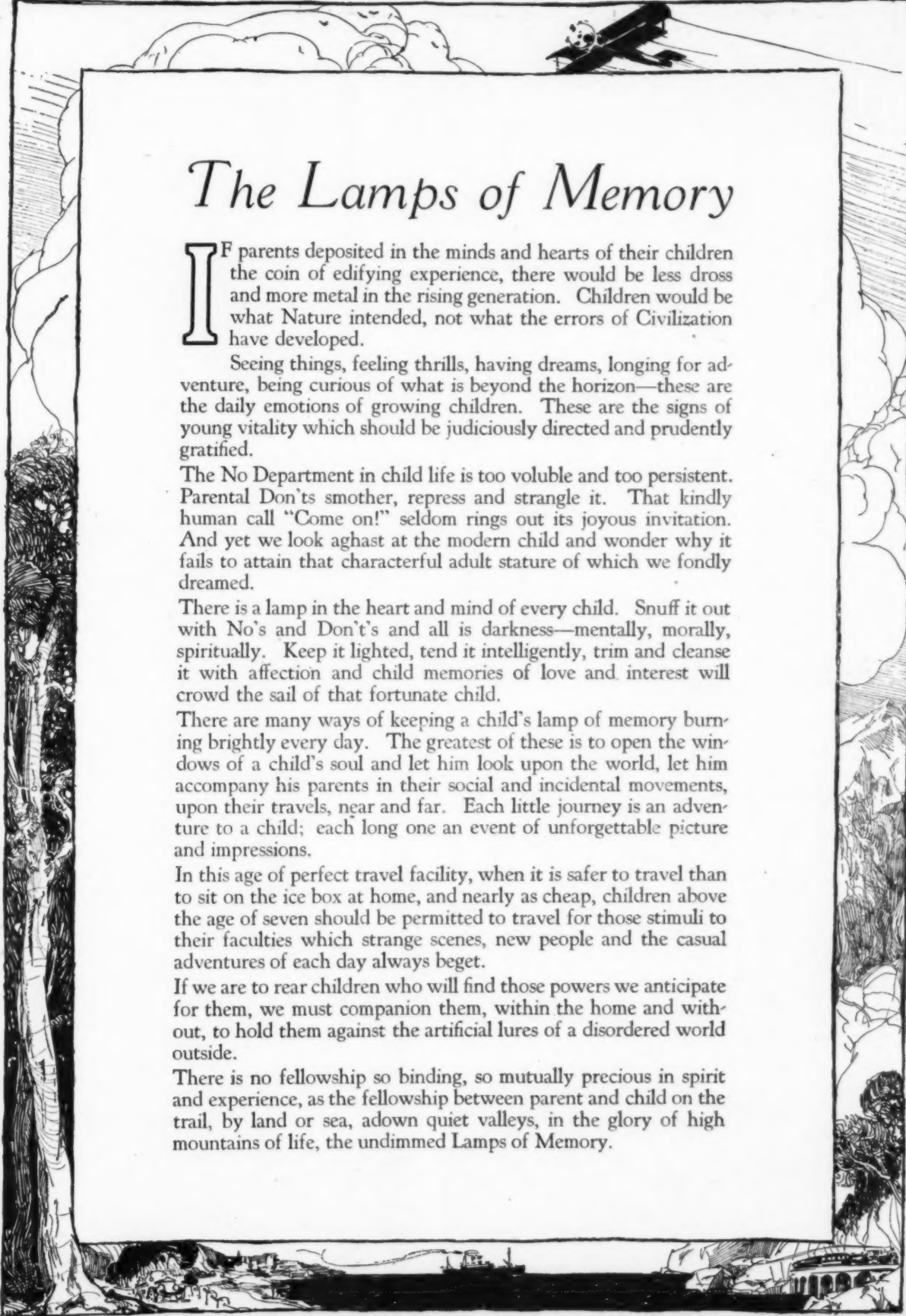
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## The Lamps of Memory

**I**F parents deposited in the minds and hearts of their children the coin of edifying experience, there would be less dross and more metal in the rising generation. Children would be what Nature intended, not what the errors of Civilization have developed.

Seeing things, feeling thrills, having dreams, longing for adventure, being curious of what is beyond the horizon—these are the daily emotions of growing children. These are the signs of young vitality which should be judiciously directed and prudently gratified.

The No Department in child life is too voluble and too persistent. Parental Don'ts smother, repress and strangle it. That kindly human call "Come on!" seldom rings out its joyous invitation. And yet we look aghast at the modern child and wonder why it fails to attain that characterful adult stature of which we fondly dreamed.

There is a lamp in the heart and mind of every child. Snuff it out with No's and Don't's and all is darkness—mentally, morally, spiritually. Keep it lighted, tend it intelligently, trim and cleanse it with affection and child memories of love and interest will crowd the sail of that fortunate child.

There are many ways of keeping a child's lamp of memory burning brightly every day. The greatest of these is to open the windows of a child's soul and let him look upon the world, let him accompany his parents in their social and incidental movements, upon their travels, near and far. Each little journey is an adventure to a child; each long one an event of unforgettable picture and impressions.

In this age of perfect travel facility, when it is safer to travel than to sit on the ice box at home, and nearly as cheap, children above the age of seven should be permitted to travel for those stimuli to their faculties which strange scenes, new people and the casual adventures of each day always beget.

If we are to rear children who will find those powers we anticipate for them, we must companion them, within the home and without, to hold them against the artificial lures of a disordered world outside.

There is no fellowship so binding, so mutually precious in spirit and experience, as the fellowship between parent and child on the trail, by land or sea, adown quiet valleys, in the glory of high mountains of life, the undimmed Lamps of Memory.





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33 West 42nd Street, New York City

mand. He had won medals in the war, and his courage was still of the same high order. But there was yet that little kink in the convolutions of his brain.

FIFTEEN minutes later the stern of *The Four Winds* began to rise: for miles and miles and years and years, it seemed to those who witnessed the spectacle. Then for miles and years the little ship rode atop the monster, her rudder and propellers lifeless. True, her propellers fought and the steering-cables screeched, but futilely. All at once the ship began to run downhill, literally and furiously, as if striving to escape her danger.

Then it was that the skipper's nerve broke. He flung aside the steersman, who was attending superbly to his business, and grasped the wheel, spinning it violently and powerfully to starboard, so that she slid sidewise as an automobile skids on a slippery turn. Thus, the mountain of water rolled under her again, under and away, but with a tremendous draw which carried *The Four Winds* to the reef and laid her smack upon it.

During this strange exercise of Nature's prerogatives, the passengers and seamen alike remained entranced, stupefied. After the crash, which had the effect of an electrical charge, the seamen rushed to the boats, and the others swarmed up from below.

The ship straddled the reef, her mid-bottom ripped wide open. She came to her death with a noise like no other. She settled slowly, but without listing perceptibly, which made it possible to lower all the boats. The imminent danger lay in the probability of her slipping over the reef, stem or stern. Free of the rocks, she would go down like a plummet.

Tragedy possesses all weapons, but loves best the spectacular thunderbolt, the unbelievable, the thing which human reason cannot accept as possible. Here was a handful of agreeable folk, a-venturing on a small but stout ship along the safely charted highways of the sea, quite as assured of the future as they would have been in their own homes. Pleasant, idle days were theirs; they made new friends; they played trifling games. Then, instantaneously, this colorful curtain called Life was rent by the Terrible, who came out of the velvet blackness of the night. . . .

Mrs. Channing wanted her dog, which was down in the cabin. She was warned that there was no time. She did not care. Nanky shouldn't die alone. . . . What if she did die trying to save him? She fought the men who roughly but kindly got her into the first boat lowered. . . .

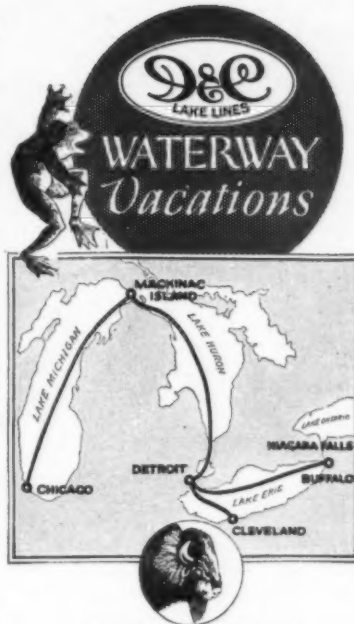
Henley dropped at his wife's feet, his heart having given out. She knelt beside him, silently holding his hand and waiting for whatever was to be. . . .

As Wyncote rushed wildly about in search of Belinda, these two scenes flashed into his eyes subconsciously, to become indelible memories so long as he lived. But he was mindful only of the fact that he had perhaps five minutes in which to find Belinda.

All the while Stefani, derelict from his duty, followed Wyncote closely. As the younger man darted for the cabin companionway, Stefani struck, not with the knife but with a bit of piping with which he was to fend back the panicky from swamping the boats. Wyncote's knees doubled, and he toppled and rolled down the stairs. At the same time the lights grew sickly dim, and shortly vanished. The water had submerged the dynamos.

Below, in her cabin, Belinda groped, sobbing, for the door-key which she had fumbled in her stark terror, dropped, and could not find.

More fascinating still are the ensuing chapters of Mr. Mac Grath's great story. Be sure to read them in the next, the September, issue.



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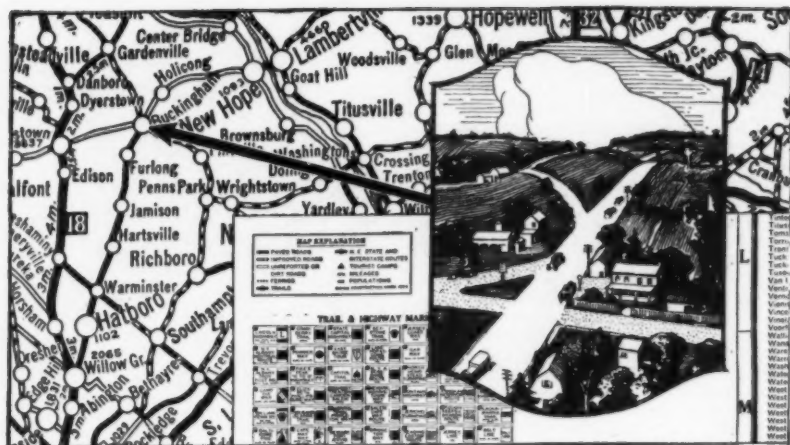
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## WHEN DEATH

willows, and juniper, huddled close to the rocky soil, as if for warmth. Here and there slight patches of brownish-white began to show in the deeper recesses of cavernous gorge, or beneath brooding ledges—the remains of the drifts of the long-gone winter, remains that soon would be white again with the snows of an imminent new winter. Ten minutes later, Snaith reached the chosen rocky turn-off, a faint trail which he had marked well in his mind during that last trip up with Mary and Jim. . . . It cramped a fellow to stay so long at the wheel.

Presently the car lights ceased to glow. Trusting as much as possible to the faint outlines of the black trail before him, Snaith moved doggedly upward, halting for breath at intervals, then taking the trail again. He carried his rifle, unwrapped now, under one arm, and employed his flashlight only when the deceptive shadows of the trail perplexed him, for light carries far in high places, and Willard Snaith was a cautious man.

A half-mile farther on he stopped in obedience to the complaint of aching lungs and dry throat. The grade and altitude were pulling at him,—for Snaith was essentially a low-country man,—weakening his knees, straining his muscles, contracting his throat and nasal passages. A panting, stooped man, he stood there in the darkness, head low upon his chest, mouth open, eyes half shut, an alien in the silence of the hills. But was it silence?

Snaith's pale blue eyes widened, and he peered anxiously, clutching instinctively at his rifle until his gaze should determine the vague, misshapen thing before him to be nothing but a windblown tree, stretching its meager branches toward the softness of lower country. Then he listened, mouth agape, as if he would answer the mummings that came—from nowhere. For he was in a land of silence. And because it was so silent, a multitude of noises seemed to flood upon him. Mutterings, murmurings, faint wailings, came to him humanly and smote him—until, after minutes of fevered waiting, they resolved themselves into the wind, sifting through rustling pines. Or the chatter of waters, tumbling from everlasting drifts, or merely the vague grumbings of these vast, aloof, tumbled hills, these shadowy, black yet ghostly upheavals, sprawled everywhere, brooding, like a beast within its lair, mumbling its age-old secrets. Willard Snaith pulled tighter at the collar of his coat. Nor did he realize, as he started on again, that he struck the fore sight of his rifle forcibly against a ledge of stone. . . . A faint wind wailed in a patch of gaunt timber near by. A coyote howled over the ridge.

A half-hour later he paused again, but only to gain enough strength to resume the climb. He grew chilly when he stopped. This time, as he fought the grade, he counted his steps, to see how many he could take before he was forced to halt again. The trail seemed so much longer than when he had followed it with Jim and Mary.

Four hundred steps—five hundred—six. If he could make it to seven! The last time, he stopped at six hundred and fifty-three. There! Seven hundred! If he could just stretch it to eight—no use stopping if he could keep on going. Ought to be pretty near there now. He looked up, and his eyes brightened. A light in the east. No—that was the west. He rubbed a hand across his eyes.

“I’m getting tired,” he told himself.

He halted again. The light in the west was growing stronger—a faint yellow, touching the tips of wraithlike things, slowly transforming them into the morning coloration of the ragged skyline of the snowy range. The sun was rising—not in the east, as was its wont, but, with the peculiarities

## STALKED (Continued from page 73)

of reflection in this topsy-turvy land, in the west. Willard Snaith stared, mouth open, unbelieving. Even as he looked, the light disappeared, and the world became only a deep blue-gray again. He glanced downward. Then once more he rubbed his hand over his eyes.

Something was creeping upward after him—something white that stretched across the deep cañon to his right. It became more clearly defined, even as he watched it. White—dead white—blotting out the faint outline of the hills beneath—closer. The sky had become a dirty gray. The wind rose. Snaith shivered and climbed on. Suddenly he halted again. The white thing out there had become a lake—a ruffled lake, with waves rising and falling, then receding with the wind far across the cañon, to the gaunt outlines of what Jim Preston had pointed out to them as the Ghost Forest—a “burn-over,” where a fire of ages past had left the timber standing, denuded of foliage, of bark, of everything save sun-whitened trunks and pleading, outstretched branches, standing there year after year in gaunt appeal, like condemned things unable to flee that which terrorized them.

“Fog again!” Willard Snaith muttered. “And he says he likes this country!”

He came to the black timber presently—the last stretch of heavy trees before the world became a scraggly thing of rocks and boulder-fields and deadfalls—and Jim’s cabin.

“It’ll be different in daylight,” he mumbled, and sank beside a tumbled mass of rock. After a long time, he slept.

HE did not awaken until the shadows were lengthening. Then he stretched, and rubbed his weak blue eyes, and stared about him, sitting for a long space in silent contemplation, like a person looking back upon a catastrophe. But there had been none. At last he reached for his rifle and moved off stealthily through the timber.

On he went until, from his hiding-place, he could see, at last, the squat little log cabin which formed the home of Jim Preston, and far above it, scarring the rock of a beetling cliff, the tunnel-hole of the mine. Willard Snaith opened the magazine of his gun and examined the cartridges. Everything was all right—five in the magazine and another in the barrel. He needed only one.

From above came a sound of grating wheels. A man appeared in the tunnel opening, pushing a tram-car, which he ran to the end of the dump; he overturned it, then moved with it back into the breast of the hill again. Willard Snaith watched Jim Preston as though he never had seen him before.

Then he looked toward the cabin, and wondered where the fruit-jar with the big nuggets was hidden. He dismissed that thought, however. That was none of his business. It must burn with the squat building, to show that everything was an accident. There were more nuggets in that mine, plenty of them. He watched the tunnel opening. Jim ought to be coming down pretty soon now.

The shadows began to fade, as if clouds had wiped them out. But the sky was still unmottled blue. The sun had gone, leaving no glow, nothing save the burnished copper atop eastern peaks, slowly changing now to violet. Then they too disappeared, and the black shadows crept more swiftly from their hiding-place beneath crag and ledge and crevice. Willard Snaith brushed his eyes. For five minutes he had been watching a mountain lion, crouched upon an opposite cliff. But as the shadows fell, he saw it was only a mass of stones.

Darkness. . . . It had come almost before he realized it; only a moment before, he had brushed a speck from the fore sight



## Washington



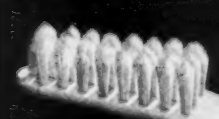
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of his rifle, something gritty which clung there. Darkness! The wind was rising again—whining, wailing. Stars gleamed, cast a peculiar radiance over the Ghost Forest off to his left.

Then, suddenly a tiny gleam appeared, bouncing down the mountain-side, disappearing, reappearing. Snaith rose, moved a step or two, then dropped again, meanwhile forcing himself to relax his almost clawlike grip on the rifle-butt.

The tiny light came on, reached the cabin, then appeared within. Willard Snaith moved to the edge of the trees. Thereupon, from the cabin, came the sound of cheery whistling, and the thumping noises of a man in heavy boots moving about on a wooden floor. The silhouette of a man carrying a lamp across the window. Snaith crouched and took careful note of his surroundings. The yellow light extended to a tree within a hundred feet. To that tree Snaith moved.

In the cabin, Jim Preston stood beside the stove. Outside, Snaith steadied his rifle against the tree, held his breath—and squeezed the trigger. When he looked again, he saw a shadow reel at the window. Then the door opened, and the form of Jim Preston appeared there, staggered a moment—presently fell and was still.

AFAR over the ridge a coyote screeched, the first of the nightly wailings. Snaith crouched, his shoulders tense. Then he crawled back to the timber and hid. After a long time he looked again toward the cabin. The form still lay motionless in the doorway. Gradually the freshness of the mountain air changed—the acrid odor of food burning upon an untended stove. But the man in the timber scarce noticed. An imperceptible shadow had shown for the merest part of an instant before the window, like a fleeting intangible thing, deserting an earthly haven. The man in the trees rubbed a wet palm across quivering chin.

"Lamp flickered!" muttered Willard Snaith—and waited.

The wind rose anew, raising the waters of the little lake which had formed the source of Jim Preston's water supply, causing the lapping of the tiny waves to assume strange proportions, like old men with their heads together. So too it invaded the weary branches of the timberline pine and juniper, rubbing branches in eerie screechings, or rustling the needles in rasping agonies. Then the coyotes howled again. Willard Snaith turned up his collar; yet the sweat dripped from beneath his hat-band.

"Everything's all right," he said. "Happened just right—just like I planned it! Everything—"

But he halted. These sounds all around him—a fellow couldn't hear. That was something from over there by the cabin. Still Jim hadn't moved. Snaith rose, then forced himself downward.

"No use going over now."

He rubbed his eyes, and turned them toward the ground. Things were dancing before him—especially over there in that forest. No need looking at that thing, anyway. Those coyotes—laughing that way: no sense to it. Again he rose; again he forced himself to the ground. It was a long time until midnight. No use fooling around there until then. Suddenly he lowered his head, covering his ears in his coat collar. A rock-slide, loosened by the wind, had begun to rumble downward, far at the end of the little lake, gathering strength as it recruited stone after stone in its crashing descent, while the hills echoed the screeching and rending with roars of demoniacal joy—thundering from cliff to cliff, rising high in fading sequences as if disappearing into the blue-black sky, only that they might descend again, a tremendous hullabaloo of eerie noise. Then all was as suddenly still—except for the coyotes, and the night birds,

beginning their wailing vigil. For a half-hour more a sweating, fidgeting thing held himself in leash; then as suddenly he bounded to his feet.

"No use in staying here and watching him!" he muttered between clicking teeth. "Dark this way, and everything. I'll look to make sure—then go somewhere and build a fire."

He moved forward swiftly to an uncanny task before a deliverance—closer, until the outlines of the man in the door were plain before him—and the black pool upon the wooden flooring. Closer—twenty feet. . . . And then—Willard Snaith screamed!

FOR something had spoken, from over there in the shadows, just beyond the window where that eerie shadow had shown in its instantaneous flight. Something in a voice that wasn't human:

"The lights o' Lanning! The lights o' Lanning! Watching you, old man!"

Then it had laughed!

The rifle dropped from the hands of the shaken man. His knees weakened, only that they might strengthen with the power of terror. That voice again:

"The lights o' Lanning! Watching you, old man!"

And below, as Willard Snaith whirled, far below, a single red eye was twinkling at him.

Unconscious of the effort, he ran, crashing through deadfall and seepage marsh, and halted at last, panting. He stared wildly back toward the still form in the distant doorway, toward that red eye, forty miles away, which seemed to be beaming at nothing but him. The breath rattled in his throat; his wet hands wiped spasmodically at his dripping forehead.

"What's the matter with me?" he asked hoarsely. "This—no way to act. It's just Mary! This country's got me. It's just imagine—"

The word was not finished. That invisible something was with him still. There in the shadows, where he could see—yet see nothing. There, laughing, mocking—then halting, only that it might screech:

"The lights o' Lanning, old man! Watching you! Watching you!"

Willard Snaith swayed. His arms rose and fell, rose and fell, as if too weak to accomplish what his brain dictated.

"Nothing there!" he panted. "Nothing—"

But the slow, jeering laugh belied him. And a scream mingled with its mocking intonation, the scream of a man who, his self-control wholly broken down, merely stood and screeched, then plunged wildly into the forest in a mad endeavor to slake his frenzy in flight. Nor did he even realize, five minutes later, that he had come to that tragic wilderness where the tree-trunks stood white and ghostly and pleading in their rooted place as monuments to an ancient forest fire. White arms reached at him now. And that Thing was still behind him, calling to him every time he came to a reeling halt, reminding him, haunting him:

"The lights o' Lanning. Watching you! Ha-ha! Ha—h-a-a!"

Wide spaced—drawn out, as if in fierce ecstasy! And that red ball of an eye, forty miles down there in the Low Country, looking up at him, and blinking like some wise thing which knew all, and merely bided its time.

But she didn't know! She couldn't know!

THE light had become a blood-red, gleaming, all-seeing eye, watching him as he raced among the grotesque tree-skeletons, where things reached at him, and demons screamed triumphant over the hills. On every side unseen creatures muttered, and when he came to a stumbling halt, grumbling sounds arose close by.

He ran again—and hid, crouched, hands

over face, while the voice followed, faintly, as though searching for him—while the maniac coyotes chuckled over the ridge, and a rock-slide boomed anew in thunderous agonies. . . .

That voice was coming closer—coming straight at him. Laughing, screeching its vindictive refrain:

"They're watching you, old man! They're watching you—the lights o' Lanning! The lights o' Lanning!"

Between his shaking fingers crept a red-dish tinge. That implacable red orb was glaring over all the world, staring into his aching eyes even when he pressed tight fists over them. He screamed, and with his face covered, heedless, ran on anew. Repeatedly he collided with those ghastly dead tree-trunks, then leaped back from them as from the clutch of pursuers. And still sounded that small strange unrelenting voice, querulous, uncertain:

"The lights o' Lanning! They're watching you, old man! Watching you—the lights o' Lanning."

The red of the sky grew brighter till every gaunt tree-skeleton stood forth like chiseled marble. And certain stones, loosened from their resting-place in the cliff above, clattered down, on and on, until their journey was finished.

THE next morning the sheriff from Lanning, with two members of his posse, stood near a smoking pile of deadfalls, talking to a weakened man whom they had just finished bandaging.

"Good thing you thought of that fire, Jim," said the sheriff. "Mary saw it and telephoned us. You'd never gotten down in the shape you're in."

"No," said Jim Preston weakly. "I knew it. Just as I told you, I was standing there by the stove. Just raising an old iron pot to put it in the warming oven. Had it a little out to one side, like this—just out from my chest, you know—when all of a sudden it burst, and a piece hit me. A shot—I heard it. Mighty bad aim, or bad sights, one of the two. At least, I thought I heard a shot. I didn't know much—couldn't have, the way that piece of iron cracked me on the head. I staggered around, I guess—don't remember much until I heard somebody screaming, and Joe following him off, probably thinking it was me, croaking his stuff about the lights of Lanning."

"Joe?" asked the sheriff.

Jim Preston laughed weakly.

"Yeh—called him that. A magpie I caught about a month or so ago. Clipped his wings and slit his tongue. Didn't have time to teach him to talk much, except at night—then just about Mary down there with the light. He got along pretty well—knows how to laugh, and says a few words about the light. You know, just what I say to myself, when I'm looking down there at Mary, winking up at me."

He turned and looked about the blackened waste. "Hope nothing's happened to Joe. Haven't heard anything out of him since that screaming—whoever it was. When I came to, thoughts weren't running very fast—except that I was hurt and that I had to get somebody up here. So I poured the oil-can on that dead wood and lit it, and locked myself in the cabin, and kept down out of sight. . . . Hope we find poor old Joe. It'd be tough for him to be lost with his wings clipped that way."

The sheriff gave a promise to search—and late that afternoon he was able to keep it. For he found Joe, at the edge of a cliff, still laughing, and prating of the lights of Lanning. Below the cliff, the sheriff found something more—something with a great stone which had rolled downward with him, flattening his chest—what once had been a careful man, looking after every detail, and prepared for any eventuality.



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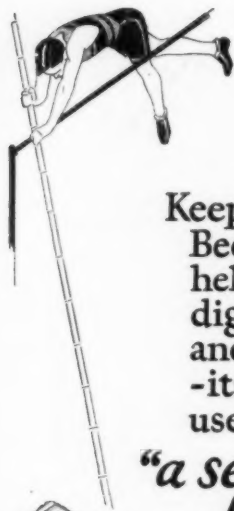
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## MAD MARRIAGE

(Continued from page 98)

He handed her a glass of water that Tommy had brought from the tap, and she drank. The woman was sick in body as well as in mind. Both of them realized that. Already there came to Peter again some of the old compassion.

"You're not well, Josie," he said. "You'd better not try to go back. Your room is all ready for you."

With an effort she got up and took a few steps toward the door.

"No—no. I—"

And then, volition suddenly failing her, she stumbled forward, groping, and would have fallen if Peter hadn't caught her in his arms. He put her on the couch, where she lay with eyes closed, in a state of collapse.

Peter found the whisky and managed to get some of it between her lips while Tommy rushed to her car to go for Wingate and a doctor.

PETER's wife was very ill. After a careful examination the doctor announced pneumonia, a heart greatly dilated, and general condition most unsatisfactory. He put her to bed in Peter's room and advised a trained nurse. The collapse had been so complete and so sudden that the patient had neither the strength nor the will to oppose them. She must have been a prey to the disease for several days, and it seemed that she had only kept herself going by the free use of stimulants, which over a period of time had weakened the resistance of her system.

Tommy volunteered to drive to Philadelphia and bring the nurse back with her, if arrangements could be made over long-distance telephone in the meanwhile. To this the doctor agreed, and there being no telephone in Peter's house, she drove him to the Wingates'. Fred at once offered to go with her, and by two o'clock in the morning they were back at Red Bridge and the nurse went immediately on duty.

Tommy's attitude, from the moment of Josie's seizure, had been admirable. Whether she felt the misfortunes of Peter's wife as deeply as he did, she expressed a warm approval of his sense of duty, and in the few moments that they spent together before her departure for New York, assured him that she bore no resentment whatever for the things Josie had said to her and of her. Death stalked in Peter's house, solemnly reminding them both that this was the hour of their renunciation. But she promised to write to Peter, and later on, if he wished to see her, to return for a few days to Red Bridge.

Intolerant and vindictive as Josie had been, Peter knew that he and Tommy hadn't been altogether without blame. There had been moments when his obligations to his wife had been quite forgotten. Josie's appearance upon the scene at one of these moments seemed indeed a proper retribution—though the means by which she had accomplished it had given him a new sharp sense of her unworthiness.

It was all rather brutal and beastly, but Peter put it out of his mind, and in Josie's moments of consciousness treated her with

every mark of consideration. There were times when she seemed about to speak to him of their affairs, but he soothed her gently and told her how important it was that she should think of nothing disturbing. She knew that she was very sick, was very much frightened at the thought of death—and spoke of her fear from time to time. But Peter reassured her, telling her that if she obeyed orders there was an excellent chance of her recovery. And curiously enough, somewhere in that thin and wasted frame there were vital forces that enabled her to pass the crisis of the disease successfully.

In convalescence, there came in Josie's attitude toward life some signs of gentleness. She was very weak and lay staring out of the windows into the bright sunshine, saying little; but she smiled at Peter from time to time, and showed appreciation for all that was being done for her.

And one afternoon in June when the nurse was off duty Josie called Peter to her side. "Peter, I've got to talk about things—"

"Do you think you'd better?"

"Oh, I'm not going to get excited," she protested. "And it will be a good deal better for me to say what I've got on my mind than to lie here and think about it. It looks as if I was going to get well. I suppose I ought to have died. I guess I would have, if it hadn't been for you. But now that I'm going to get well, I've got to begin to look things in the face again. I wanted you to know that I haven't got anything against you, Peter. You've certainly done all you could. And of course you think I've been pretty rotten to you. I guess I have. I'm sorry. When I get well, I'm going to get out of here, and you will never see me again."

"That's nonsense," Peter said cheerfully.

"No. I'm going to try to be square with you. That's what I wanted to tell you. I never loved you, Peter. I guess you knew that. You weren't my kind, any more than I was yours. And you didn't love me. I knew that too. I never loved anybody but Jack Salazar. I didn't want anybody else, no matter what he did to me. I might as well tell you the truth. I thought maybe if I was married to you, he might want me again. That was a funny way of thinking. But it was right. He came back to me for a while. . . . Then he left me. I got pretty wild, mad at you for coming between us—mad at him for quitting the way he did. And I didn't care much what happened to me. . . . There's no use telling you about that, though. I just want to tell you what I've been thinking about, lying here. I see things different, somehow, since I've been sick. It's like when I was in the hospital in Philadelphia. When you're weak, you seem to see things clearer. Maybe when I'm up and about, I won't see them as clear as I do now."

She went on slowly, her gaze out of the window:

"I guess I must have been sort of crazy in my head when I came down here—I must have been doped up for a good while before I came. I want you to forget what happened that night. I guess I could get a lot of money out of Sadie Keith if I wanted to, for what she's done; but the way I feel now, I'm not going to try. She's a friend of yours, and if you want to marry her, I'll just step out of the way and let you. You'd better take me at my word and act quick. I'll do what I ought to do. I don't like her. I'll be hating her again pretty soon when I get strong enough to hate anybody. But I don't hate anybody now. I haven't got any hate in me, and I wanted to tell you all this. I want you to draw up a paper for me to sign while I feel this way."

## "Stop Thief"

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**HARVEY O'HIGGINS**



Peter took her hand and patted it gently. "No, there'll be nothing for you to sign, Josie."

"Well, have it your own way. But you'd better make sure of me. You've been pretty fine to me, and I didn't have sense enough to know it." She took his hand and kissed it. There were tears in her eyes—tears of weakness, perhaps, but they passed with Peter as tokens of penitence. She seemed suddenly to grow very tired, and so Peter took her in his arms and put her to bed.

"Now go away," she said petulantly, as though ashamed of her few fine moments. "I want to sleep."

THE frankness of this confession gave Peter moments of serious thought. From all that he knew of her, it was difficult to believe that her gentleness and charity were permanent. But he accepted her renunciation in good faith, aware that now more than ever, it was his duty to make what he could of her good will and build upon it a friendly relationship in which he might help her back to contentment and some sort of reasonable attitude toward life. Whether this would be possible he did not know, but he meant to do what he could, relinquishing definitely the dreams that Tommy's visit had set whirling through his head.

He wrote Tommy a long letter, telling her of this conversation and of his purpose to make a new effort to keep Josie in Red Bridge as long as she would consent to stay.

"Of course, I admit," he wrote, "that it is impossible for me to believe she will ever be happy in this place or with me, and it's difficult to believe that her attitude is permanent. But as long as she will stay here, I intend to do what I can for her. I could never live with her again. But I can try to give her my friendship and try to save her at least from the terrible life that she has lived in New York. I know sickbed repentances are not to be trusted, but I must take her at her word. It's the only thing that I can do."

"And so, my dear, our mad dream—even of a 'spiritual marriage,' as you call it—is over. If you're coming down to the Wingates' again, as you promised, let it be soon for there are many things, quite harmless things, that were left unsaid in your brief eventful visit to the Island."

To this Tommy replied briefly that she would come to Red Bridge the following week, signing herself:

"The little old lady with the spit-curls."

#### Chapter Twenty-three

WHEN Tommy came to Red Bridge for a few days, Peter managed to arrange to visit Wingate's house in the evenings after the patient had been put to bed. Tommy found him very tired and very thoughtful, but she seemed to have good spirits enough for them both. Fred Wingate, who had always been an outspoken creature, loyal to his friends and distrustful of their enemies, remarked quite brutally that it was a pity that Josie hadn't died. And he did the best he could for Tommy and Peter by going to bed early.

And so Peter and Tommy had the big studio on the hillside to themselves. But they were now more than ever impressed by the solemnity of their obligations to the sick woman and to each other, sitting in the two armchairs by the big north window thrown open to the stars, and conversing with calm circumspection upon the philosophical aspects of their unfortunate passion.

"There does really seem to be a law of compensation, doesn't there, Peter? You and I have everything in the world to make life desirable—I money, you talent and success. It looks as though we already had all that was coming to us, and that it isn't intended

that we should have each other. But we've got to be satisfied."

"Not satisfied," Peter put in. "Stoical."

"The funny thing about it all is that you've infected me with your idealism. I've come to understand that you're right. Sometimes I even believe that I'm more convinced of your rightness than you are yourself. You know,"—she leaned back in her chair and gazed at a star that winked down at her benignantly,—"*you know*, I was an awful rotter when I first met you, Peter. No—let me speak. It's been in my mind for a long while. In those days I was very much the same sort of girl that Josie Brant was. I think in some ways I was worse, because I'd had every opportunity, every kind of incentive to be better. That I wasn't exactly the same sort of a girl that Josie got to be was due to the accident of meeting you. I was reckless, satiated with pleasures, hunting new sensations. I was rather a magnificent sort of creature, gloating over my independence, intolerant of the thought of marriage, ready, as you said, 'I'll never forget the phrase,—ready to 'sin splendidly.' Well, you prevented that, by showing me Josie. It was a terrible picture to open my eyes with, but somehow it did it. It was like looking in a mirror at myself and seeing Josie instead. I was Josie—almost. How I hated myself for being made ridiculous! The queer part of the thing was that I didn't hate you too. But I didn't. There was a kind of benevolence about the way you took

me in charge, as though you were a tall policeman taking home a small child that had lost its way. You know, I liked the calm way you went about it. I never owed anybody anything before the moment you sent Jack Salazar out of my apartment. But I owed you—and I realized it—more than I could ever pay."

"You've paid it, my dear—many times," said Peter soberly.

"Well," she went on, "what I'm coming to is this—and it's taken me a long while to see it: If you hadn't happened along, I'd have become just what Josie Brant has been—in a different class in life, of course, with money and luxury, the refinements of culture that put a gloss on sin and take away from it some of its ugliness and brutality, but the same, the very same. That's true. There are women of my crowd who have gone that way—women like me who thought as I thought, that the new era for women had come, the day of the bachelor girl, of independence, of equality with men in all things. But it hadn't, and it never will. There isn't any new era. A lot of water has run under the bridge since the Middle Ages, but it won't run upstream. Good Lord, what a fool I've been!"

"If you call yourself names," Peter said with a laugh, "I shall kiss you."

"A spiritual kiss!" She made a *moue* with her lips and threw out her arms toward the stars. "There!" she said. "It's done! How simple!" And then with delicate



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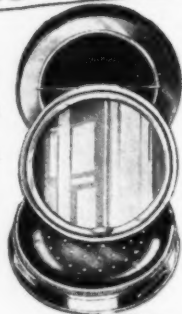
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## Something NEW for BOBBED HAIR

There is a tremendous difference in bobs. Some are wonderfully attractive and becoming, while others, well—which kind is yours?

I wish you could picture the becoming kind I have in mind—the sort that makes men turn to admire. I can't tell you what the color is, but it's full of those tiny dancing lights that somehow suggest auburn, yet which are really no more actual color than sunlight. It's only when the head is moved that you catch the auburn suggestion—the fleeting glint of gold.

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irony: "But it's not worth while doing again. So I sha'n't call myself names any more."

THERE was a silence during which Peter leaned forward, staring out of the window. Tommy went on quietly:

"Josie is going to get well. Her death would have simplified matters for us. But I don't think—yes, I'm sure that I haven't wanted her to die. She has as much right to her life as you or I have. From now on, Peter, you and I shouldn't see too much of each other. I'm beginning to realize that. And it hurts. But up there"—she pointed to the heavens—"is a star that I've been watching."

"The North Star," said Peter.

"The North Star," she repeated. "Yes, it's well named. It's so cold, so pale, so aloof. But gentle, too! Well, I've appropriated it, for us, Peter. God wont mind. There are so many of them. And that star is going to be kind to us both; it's going to be there for us both to look at at night when things bother, when pain comes, the pain of memory."

She broke off suddenly and leaned forward, peering around the edge of the transom where Peter could not see.

"Why, what's that?"

Peter rose, and they both walked to the window, looking out. There was a dull glow, copper-colored, above the trees and roofs of the houses below them.

"The furnaces at Smithville—" Peter said, immediately contradicting himself. "No, it's nearer."

Just then from the road outside came the sound of a youthful voice shouting: "Fire!"

Peter straightened and stared eagerly.

"It's beyond the towpath," he said. "Brush, maybe. . . . And yet it couldn't be that. . . . Tommy!"

The same thought came to them both as Peter rushed through the house, followed by Tommy. People were running down the hill.

"They say it's Randle's," Peter heard.

TOMMY ran to Wingate's garage and backed her car out of the driveway; Peter leaped in, and in a moment they were plunging down the hill. There was no doubt now. As they crossed the bridge over the canal, the roof of Peter's studio was blazing brightly, and they had a glimpse of the main building, from the windows of which smoke was pouring.

"Of course they've got her out," Peter was saying. Tommy said nothing—taking the down grade at full speed.

The space between the house and sheds was as bright as in daylight. The shadows of a few figures leaped gigantic among the trees. A man running down the lane jumped to the running-board of Tommy's car, shouting something unintelligible. But they had reached the place before the straggling crowd from the village which was streaming after them. In front of the house several people screamed and gesticulated. A man dashed in at the door and came out almost at once, his arms over his face.

All of these things Peter took in during the brief dash from the lower bridge to the sheds. He could now make out the identity of the figures before the house. Martha, Miss Jeffreys, the nurse. Both were hysterical—Martha mad with excitement, Miss Jeffreys crying wildly to the man who had come, defeated, from the hallway.

Peter caught the nurse by the arm. "Mrs. Randle!" he gasped.

"She's up there—on the floor—near the doorway of the bathroom. I tried to get her out. But I had to wake Martha. There wasn't time—"

In the firelight Tommy's glance and Peter's flashed and fused, burning with one thought. Peter read Tommy's meaning as he knew his own. Tommy told him to go,

while Peter was already running toward the front door, stripping off his coat. Wrapping it around his head, he dashed into the hallway and up the stairs. He stumbled on the burning treads, but managed to reach the landing, suffocated, his shirt-sleeve ablaze. But he beat out the flame and went on hands and knees, feeling his way, groping, toward the bathroom, where he found Josie unconscious on the floor, wrapped in a blanket over her nightdress.

Peter caught her up in his arms, but at the door into the hall a blast of flame now beat him back, as he strove to make his way out again. So he closed the door and retreated through bathroom and bedroom toward the back stairs. The upper door was closed, but tongues of flame were leaping under it. The dry wood of the old building was crackling horribly.

The window, then! There were no out-buildings, and the ground toward the river was a sheer drop of twenty feet among the rocks. Breathing with great difficulty, Peter planned quickly, blindly, leaving his unconscious burden, tearing the sheets and blankets from the bed and knotting them securely, tying them under Josie's arms and carrying her to the window. His strength, he knew, was failing him, but with an effort he raised Josie to the sill, taking a turn of his improvised rope around the heavy post of the bed.

As he appeared, the people below shouted encouragement and ran forward under the window. It was a fight for seconds of time, but he lowered away slowly, sweating and gasping for breath, aware of the splitting panels of the door behind him. He could see nothing. His eyes seemed to be burning in their sockets, but the air from the window revived him for a moment, and he managed to keep his hold of the rope until the weight of his burden suddenly relaxed. He leaned out across the sill, gasping for breath. He thought it extraordinary how clearly he was thinking of what he meant to do—with no strength to do it. So he just hung there, fighting for his breath, while the smoke poured over him in billows, illuminated by the flames that had burst in the door.

People below him were shouting, telling him not to jump. Jump! That was funny. He couldn't jump. His feet were like weights chained to the floor. And God, the heat! With a sheer effort of will, he hauled himself by his arms up on the sill and clung. He would fall out in a moment, he knew, but even death there below among the rocks was better than this other death behind him—a cool death. Anything better than this heat, this terrible heat that urged him to go. He must for a moment have lost consciousness, but clung desperately to the shutter-hinge even then. . . . Shouts—from a great distance—growing nearer. . . . Voices closer, strong hands grasping him as a tongue of flame shot over his head—and then unconsciousness.

IT was Martha who knew where the ladder was—in the cellar, which the fire hadn't touched; and they had managed to get it up to the bedroom window just in time. It was an old ladder, but a long one, reaching the sill at a good angle, and two strong young men climbed it and brought Peter down. But it was a close fight with the flames. They laid Peter on the grass and threw water on his smoldering clothing.

When he came to consciousness, it was Tommy's face that he saw first. She was crying.

"Peter—Peter, dear!" she cried. "You're all right?"

"Yes. I—I'm all right. And—and she?"

"I don't know. She was unconscious. They've taken her to the house beyond the canal. Miss Jeffreys went with her."

"Well, I did what I could, Tommy." His blackened lips twisted.

Tommy regarded him soberly. She knew from the twitching of his face that he was suffering, but he gathered strength enough to get to his feet, while willing hands helped him to Tommy's car, in which she drove him to the Wingates'.

He was not all right. In the light he looked burnt to a cinder; his hair was singed, his eyebrows gone. Wingate had cut the tatters of clothing from his body, and was applying home remedies when the doctor arrived. Tommy awaited his decision anxiously, but was rewarded by the assurance that the percentage of blistered surface was well within the safety limit. As to his lungs, he did not know, but there seemed to be no sign of internal damage.

He had given Peter a hypodermic to save him from the pain. But Randle was strong—with a good heart and fine lungs. He would recover. Perhaps she could help with the nursing.

Meanwhile the doctor sent Tommy to Smithville in her car to fetch a salve that he would order over the phone, and went back to the room where Peter lay, already partly stupefied by the morphia. Wingate rose from the bedside where he had been anxiously watching the patient.

"Do you think he'll do all right, Loomis?" Wingate asked, as they moved into the next room.

"Oh, yes—if there's no inflammation or poison in the lungs. That was a fine performance, Wingate—from all that I hear."

Wingate grunted. "A damn-fool performance, if you ask me. Peter always was a damn fool. But risking his valuable life for a creature like that woman—"

"He risked it in vain," said Loomis dryly.

"You mean she—"

The doctor nodded.

PETER, still swathed in bandages, lay in the *chaise longue* on the Wingates' porch, which overlooked the woods and river. Tommy, still a visitor at Red Bridge, was reading aloud to him. From her room Mary Wingate glanced out at the pair on the porch, smiling contentedly. Things were going quite to her liking. Peter Randle was getting well. All the village resounded with praise of his exploit, and Mary, who was the purveyor of news from the sickroom, had achieved an importance in the community second only to Peter himself.

Josie's funeral had been melancholy enough. She had no near relatives, so far as Peter knew, except the aunt who had formerly lived at the Milestown Crossroads; but the church was comfortably filled by Peter's friends, Josie's acquaintances, and a considerable gathering of other persons from the village.

Peter had suffered a great deal, but now professed himself quite without pain. He had, in more respects than one, passed through fire into safety and contentment.

As Tommy paused in her reading, Peter put out his right hand and laid it over the page of the book. She looked up at him.

"Tired?" she asked.

"Not in the least," he said with a smile. "But I'd much rather you talked to me."

She laughed and put the book aside.

"What shall we talk about?"

"Us."

"Wonderful pronoun!"

"I've got something to say to you, Tommy. Something important."

"Yes?"

"I think, if you don't mind, that I'd like you to marry me."

"Really?"

"That is, if you haven't changed your mind. I'm rather a wreck just now, but I suppose I'll come through all right."

He was delicious. Tommy let him talk.

"Of course, everything I had was destroyed. I've got to begin again. I'm a beggar, you know. It's funny that I never



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thought of your money before. But I've been thinking a lot about it lately. It worries me. When I had money, I was such a rotten painter—"

"Perhaps we'd better not marry, after all," she said demurely.

He stared at her, but she looked up at him.

"I mean," she went on, "if you're afraid of being a rotten painter again."

He caught her hand and held it tightly.

"Tommy," he urged, "why can't we forget how rich you are? Money stifles—too much of it. We could be happy without it."

THE END.

## VELVET EAR-MUFFS

(Continued from page 45)

could not always rely implicitly on the information given by strangers casually encountered; no, not even when it was offered with affability, and in the reassuring twang of a Western State. But after all, Monte Carlo was not a capital; it was just an absurd little joke of a town crammed on a ledge between sea and mountain; and a second glance at the young man convinced the Professor that he was as harmless as the town.

Mr. Tring, who seemed quick at thought-reading, returned his look with an amused glance.

"Not much like our big and breezy land, is it? These Riviera resorts always remind me of the subway at rush hours; everybody strap-hanging. But my landlady is an old friend, and I know one of her boarders left this morning, because I heard her trying to seize his luggage. He got away; so I don't see why you shouldn't have his room. See?"

The Professor saw. But he became immediately apprehensive of having his own luggage seized, an experience unprecedented in his history.

"Are such things liable to occur in this place?" he inquired.

"What? A scrap with your landlady? Not if you pay up regularly, or if she likes you. I guess she didn't like that other fellow; and I know he was always on the wrong side of the tables."

"The tables—do you refer to the gambling-tables?" The Professor stopped short to put the question.

"That's it," said the other.

"And do you yourself sometimes visit the gambling-rooms?" the Professor next inquired.

"Oh, hell!" said Taber Tring expressively.

The Professor scrutinized him with growing interest. "And have you a theory of chance?"

The young man met his gaze squarely. "I have; but it can't be put into language that would pass the censor."

"Ah—you refer, no doubt, to your personal experience. But as regards the theory—"

"Well, the theory has let me down to bed-rock; and I came down on it devilish hard." His expression turned from apathy to animation. "I'm stony-broke; but if you'd like to lend me a hundred francs to have another try—"

"Oh, no," said the Professor hastily; "I don't possess it." And his doubts began to stir again.

Taber Tring laughed. "Of course you don't—not for lending purposes. I was only joking; everybody makes that joke here. Well, here's the house; I'll go ahead and rout out our hostess."

They stopped before a pleasant-looking little house at the end of the street. A palm-tree, a couple of rosebushes and a gateway surmounted by the word "Arcadie" divided it from the street; the Professor drew a breath of relief as a stout lady in an orange wig bustled out to receive him.

"All right," she said with a laugh. "I'll give it all away. Endow a home for idealists. Another for irresponsible spinsters."

"Please be serious."

"I am. And to show how serious I am, I'll begin by endowing you and me. We'll rebuild the house and studio, and at the bridge we'll put a sign: 'This Way to Paradise.' And then—"

At this moment Fred Wingate put in his appearance and grinned at them from the doorway.

"Peter," he said, "I don't believe you're so much of a fool, after all."

THE END.

In spite of the orange wig her face was so full of a shrewd benevolence that the Professor felt he had reached a haven of rest. She welcomed him affably, assured him that she had a room, and offered to lead him up to it. "Only for tonight, though. For it is promised to a Siamese nobleman for tomorrow," she stipulated.

This, the Professor assured her, made no difference, as he would be leaving at daylight. But on the lowest step of the stair he turned and addressed himself to Mr. Tring:

"Perhaps the lady would be good enough to have my bags brought up from the station? If you would kindly explain that I'm going out now to take a little stroll—As I'm leaving so early tomorrow, it's my only chance to have a look around."

"That's so; I'll tell her," the young man rejoined sympathetically; and as the Professor's hand was on the gate, he heard Mr. Tring call out, mimicking the stentorian tones of a megaphone man on a sight-seeing motorbus: "Third street to the left, then first right to the tables;" after which he added, in his natural tone: "Say, Arcadie locks up at midnight."

The Professor smiled at the superfluous hint.

HAVING satisfied a polyglot doorkeeper as to his nationality, and the fact that he was not a minor, the Professor found himself in the gambling-rooms. They were not particularly crowded, for people were beginning to go out for dinner, and he was able to draw fairly near to the first roulette-table he encountered.

As he stood looking over the shoulders of the players, he understood that no study of abstract theories could be worth the experience acquired by thus observing the humors of the goddess in her very temple. Her caprice, so ably seconded by the inconceivable stupidity, timidity or rashness of her votaries, first amused and finally exasperated the Professor; he began to feel toward her something of the annoyance excited in him by the sight of a pretty woman, or any other vain superfluity, combined with the secret sense that if he chose, he could make her dance to his tune, and that it might be mildly amusing to do so. He had felt the same once or twice—but only for a fugitive instant—about pretty women.

None, however, had ever attracted him as strongly as this veiled divinity. The longing to twitch the veil from her cryptic features became violent, irresistible. "Not one of these fools has any idea of the theory of chance," he muttered to himself, elbowing his way to a seat near one of the croupiers. As he did so, he put his hand into his pocket, and found to his disgust that it contained only a single five-franc piece and a few sous. All the rest of his cash—a matter of four or five hundred francs—lay locked up in his suitcase at Arcadie. He anathematized his luck in expurgated language, and was about to rise from the table when the

croupier called out: "*Faites vos jeux, messieurs.*"

The Professor, with a mild murmured expletive, dropped back into his place and flung his five-franc piece on the last three numbers. He lost.

Of course—in his excitement he had gone exactly contrary to his own theory! It was on the first three that he had meant to stake his paltry bet. Well, now it was too late. But stay—

Diving into another pocket, he came with surprise on a hundred-franc note. Could it really be his? But no; he had an exact memorandum of his funds, and he knew this bank-note was not to be thus accounted for. He made a violent effort to shake off his abstraction, and finally recalled that the note in question had been pressed into his hand that very afternoon as he left the train. But by whom?

"*Messieurs, faites vos jeux! Faites vos jeux! Le jeu est fait. Rien ne va plus.*"

The hundred francs, escaping from his hand, had fluttered of themselves to a number in the middle of the table. That number came up. Across the green board thirty-six other hundred-franc notes flew swiftly back in the direction of the Professor. Should he put them all back on the same number? "Yes," he nodded calmly to the croupier's question; and the three thousand, seven hundred francs were guided to their place by the croupier's rake.

The number came up again, and another argosy of notes sailed into the haven of the happy gambler's pocket. This time he knew he ought to settle down quietly to his theory; and he did so. He staked a thousand and tripled it, then let the three thousand lie, and won again. He doubled that stake, and began to feel his neighbors watching him with mingled interest and envy as the winnings once more flowed his way. But to whom did this mounting pile really belong?

No time to think of that now; he was fast in the clutches of his theory. It seemed to guide him like some superior being seated at the helm of his intelligence: his private *dæmon* pitted against the veiled goddess! It was exciting, undoubtedly; considerably more so, for example, than taking tea with the president's wife at Purewater. He was beginning to feel like Napoleon, disposing his battalions to right and left, advancing, retreating, reinforcing or redistributing his troops. Ah, the veiled goddess was for once getting what she deserved.

At a late hour of the evening, when the Professor had become the center of an ever-thickening crowd of fascinated observers, it suddenly came back to him that a woman had given him that original hundred-franc note. A woman in the train that afternoon!

But what did he care for that? He was playing the limit at every stake; and his mind had never worked more clearly and with a more exquisite sense of complete detachment. He was in his own particular seventh heaven of lucidity. He even recalled, at the precise moment when cognizance of the fact became useful, that the doors of Arcadie closed at midnight, and that he had only just time to get back if he wished to sleep with a roof over his head.

As he did wish to, he pocketed his gains quietly and composedly, rose from the table and walked out of the rooms. He felt hungry, cheerful and alert. Perhaps, after all, excitement had been what he needed—pleasurable excitement, that is, not the kind occasioned by the small daily irritations of life, such as the presence of that woman in the train whose name he was still unable to remember. What he would have liked best of all would have been to sit down in one of the brightly lit cafés he was passing, before a bottle of beer and a ham sandwich; or perhaps what he had heard spoken of as a Welsh rabbit. But he did not want to

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sleep on a bench, for the night air was sharp; so he continued self-denyngly on his way to Arcadie.

A sleepy boy in a dirty apron let him in, locked up after him, and led him to a small bare room on the second floor. The stairs creaked and rattled as they mounted, and the rumblings of sleep sounded through the doors of the rooms they passed. Arcadie was a cramped and ramshackle construction, and the Professor hoped to heaven that his *pension* in the hills would be more solidly built and less densely inhabited. However, for one night it didn't matter—or so he imagined.

His guide left him, and he turned on the electric light, threw down on the table the notes with which all his pockets were bulging, and began to unstrap his portmanteaux.

Though he had so little luggage, he always found the process of unpacking a long and laborious one; for he never could remember where he had put anything, and invariably passed through all the successive phases of apprehension and despair before he finally discovered his bedroom slippers in his sponge-bag, and the sponge itself (still dripping) rolled up inside his pajamas.

But tonight he sought for neither sponge nor pajamas, for as he opened his first suitcase, his hand lit on a ream of spotless foolscap—the kind he always used for his literary work. The table on which he had tossed his winnings held a crusty hotel inkstand, and was directly overhung by a vacillating electric bulb. Before it was a chair; through the open window flowed the silence of the night, interwoven with the murmurs of a sleeping sea and hardly disturbed by the occasional far-off hoot of a motor-horn. In his own brain was the same nocturnal quiet and serenity. A curious thing had happened

to him. His bout with the veiled goddess had sharpened his wits and dragged him suddenly and completely out of the intellectual apathy into which he had been gradually immersed by his illness and the harassing discomforts of the last few weeks. He was no longer thinking now about the gambling-tables or the theory of chance; but with all the strength of his freshly stimulated faculties was grappling the mighty monster with whom he meant to try a fall.

"Einstein!" he cried, as a Crusader might have shouted his battle-cry. He sat down at the table, shoved aside the bank-notes, plunged his pen into the blue mud of the inkstand, and began.

The silence was delicious, mysterious. Link by link the chain of his argument unrolled itself, traveling across his pages with the unending flow of a trail of migratory caterpillars. Not a break, not a hesitation. It was years since his mental machinery had worked with that smooth consecutiveness. He began to wonder whether, after all, it might not be better to give up the idea of a remote and doubtful *pension* in the hills, and settle himself for the winter in a place apparently so propitious to his intellectual activities.

It was then that the noises in the next room suddenly began. First there was the brutal slam of the door, followed by a silly bad-tempered struggle with a reluctant lock. Then a pair of shoes were flung down on the tiled floor. Water was next poured into an unsteady basin, and a water-jug set down with a hideous clatter on a rickety washstand which seemed to be placed against the communicating door between the two rooms. Turbulent ablutions ensued. These over, there succeeded a moment of deceptive calm, almost immediately followed by a series of





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whistled scales, emitted just above the whistler's breath, and merging into the exact though subdued reproduction of various barnyard gutturals, ending up with the raucous yelp of a parrot proclaiming again and again: "I'm stony-broke, I am!"

All the while Professor Hibbart's brain continued to marshal its arguments, and try to press them into the hard mold of words. But the struggle became more and more unequal as the repressed cacophony next door increased. At last he jumped up, rummaged in every pocket for his ear-muffs and snapped them furiously over his ears. But this measure, instead of silencing the tenuous insistent noises from the next room, only made him strain for them more attentively through the protecting pads, giving them the supernatural shrillness of sounds heard at midnight in a sleeping house, the secret crackings and creakings against which heaped-up pillows and drawn-up bedclothes are a vain defense.

Finally the Professor noticed that there was a wide crack under the communicating door. Not till that crack was filled would work be possible. He jumped up again and dived at the washstand for towels. But he found that in the hasty preparation of the room, the towels had been forgotten. A newspaper, then—but no; he cast about him in vain for a newspaper. . . .

The noises had now sunk to a whisper, broken by irritating intervals of silence; but in the exasperated state of the Professor's nerves, these irregular lulls, and the tension of watching for the sounds that broke them, were more trying than what had gone before. He cast a despairing glance about him. Finally his eye lit on the pile of bank-notes on the table. He sprang up again, seized the bank-notes, and crammed them into that crack under the door.

After that the silence in the next room became suddenly and almost miraculously complete, and he went on with his writing.

AFTER his first twenty-four hours in the hills, the Professor was ready to swear that this final refuge was all he had hoped for. The situation (though he had hardly looked out on it) seemed high, yet sheltered; he had a vague impression of sunshine in his room; and when he went down on the first morning, after a deep and curative sleep, he at once found himself in a congenial atmosphere. No effusive compatriots, no bowing and scraping French; only four or five English people, as much in dread of being spoken to as he was of their speaking to him. He consumed the necessary number of square inches of proteins and carbohydrates, and withdrew to his room as stubbornly ignored as if the other guests had all thought he was trying to catch their eyes. An hour later he was completely lost in his work.

If only life could ever remain on an even keel! But something had made him suspect it from the first: *there was a baby in the house*. Of course everybody denied it: the cook said the bowl of pap left by accident on the stairs was for the cat; the landlady said she had been a widow twenty years, and did he suppose—And the *bonne* denied that there was a smell of paregoric on the landing, and said that was the way the *mimosas* sometimes affected people.

That night, after a constitutional in the garden (ear-muffs on), the Professor went up to his room to resume his writing. For two hours he wrote uninterruptedly; then he was disturbed by a faint wail. He clapped on the pads, and continued writing; but the wail, low as it was, pierced them like a corkscrew. Finally he laid down his pen and listened, furiously. Every five minutes the sound came again. "I suppose they'll say it's a kitten!" he growled. No such pretense could deceive him for a moment; he remembered now that at the moment of en-

tering the house he had noticed a smell of nursery. If only he had turned straight around, and gone elsewhere! Ah—but where?

The idea of a fresh plunge into the unknown made him feel as weak as in the first stages of convalescence. And then his book had already sunk such talons into him; he could feel it sucking at his brain like some hungry animal. And all those people downstairs had been as cold and stony at dinner as they had at lunch. After two such encounters, he was sure they would never bother him. A Paradise indeed, but for that serpent!

The wail continued, and he turned in his chair and looked slowly and desperately about him. The room was small and bare, and had only one door, the one leading into the passage. He vaguely recalled that, two nights before at Monte Carlo, he had been disturbed in much the same way, and had found means to end the disturbance. What had he done? If only he could remember!

His eye went back to the door. There was a light under it now; no doubt some one was up with the child. Slowly his mind dropped from the empyrean to the level of the crack under the door.

"A couple of towels. . . . Ah, but there are no towels!" Almost as the words formed themselves, his glance lit on a well-garnished rack. What had made him think there were no towels? Why, he had been reliving the night at Monte Carlo, where in fact, he now remembered, he could find none, and to protect himself from the noise next door had had to—

"Oh, my God!" shouted the Professor. His pen clattered to the floor. He jumped up, and his chair crashed after it. The baby, terror-struck, ceased to cry. There was an awful silence.

"Oh, my God!" shouted the Professor. Slowly the vision of that other room came back: he saw himself jumping up just as wildly, dashing for towels and finding none, and then seizing a pile of papers and cramming them into the crack under the door. Papers, indeed! "Oh, my God!"

It was money that he had seized that other night: hundreds of hundred-franc bills; or were they hundreds of thousands? How furiously he had crushed them in his haste to stuff them into the crack! Money—an unbelievable amount of it. But how in the world had it got there? To whom on earth did it belong?

The Professor sat down on the edge of the bed and took his bursting head between his hands.

DAYLIGHT found him still laboring to reconstitute the succession of incredible episodes leading up to his mad act. Of all the piles of notes he had stuffed under the door, not one had belonged to him. Of that he was now sure. He recalled also, but less clearly, that some one had given him a bank-note—a hundred francs, he thought: was it on the steamer at Marseilles, or in the train?—given it with some mysterious injunction about gambling. . . . That was as far as he could go at present. . . . His mind had come down from the empyrean with a crash, and was still dazed from its abrupt contact with reality. At any rate the money wasn't his, and he had left it under the door in his hotel bedroom at Monte Carlo! And that was two days ago. . . .

The baby was crying again, but the rest of the house still slept when, unkempt, unshorn, and with as many loose ends to his raiment as *Hamlet*, Professor Hibbart dashed out past an affrighted *bonne* who cried after him that he might still catch the motorbus if he took the shortcut to the village.

To the Professor, any abrupt emergence from his work was like coming-to after a severe operation. He floated in a world



empty of ideas and facts, and hemmed with slippery perpendicular walls. All the way to Monte Carlo those walls were made of the faces in the motorbus, blank inscrutable faces, smooth, secret surfaces up which his mind struggled to clamber back to the Actual. Only one definite emotion survived: hatred of the being—a woman, was it?—who had given him that hundred-franc note. He clung to that feeling as to a life-belt, waiting doggedly till it should lift him back to reality. If only he could have recalled his enemy's name!

ARRIVED at Monte Carlo, he hailed a taxi and pronounced the one name he did recall: "Arcadie!" But what chance was there that the first chauffeur he met would know the title, or remember the site, of that undistinguished family hotel?

"Arcadie? But, of course! It's the place they're all asking for!" cried the chauffeur, turning without a moment's hesitation in what seemed to his fare to be the right direction. Yet how could that obscure pension be the place "they" were all asking for, and who in the name of madness were "they?"

"Are you sure?" the Professor faltered. "Of finding the way? *Allons donc*; we have only to follow the crowd!"

This was a slight exaggeration, for at that early hour the residential quarter of Monte Carlo was hardly more populous than when the Professor had last seen it; but if he had doubted being on the right road, his doubt was presently dispelled by the sight of a well-set-up young man in tennis flannels, with a bright conversational eye, who came swinging along from the opposite direction.

"Taber Tring!" screamed a voice from the depths of the Professor's subconsciousness; and the Professor nearly flung himself over the side of the taxi in his eagerness to attract his friend's notice.

Apparently he had been mistaken: for the young man, arrested by his signals, gave back a blank stare from eyes grown suddenly speechless, and then, turning on his heels, disappeared double-quick down a side-street. The Professor, thrown back into his habitual uncertainty, wavered over the question of pursuit; but the taxi was still moving, and before he could decide, it had worked its way through a throng of gaping people and drawn up before a gate surmounted by the well-remembered "Arcadie." "There you are!" the chauffeur gestured, with the air of a parent humoring a spoiled child.

There he was! He started to jump out, and pushing through the crowd, was confronted with a smoking ruin. The gate, under its lying inscription, led straight into chaos; and behind where Arcadie had stood, other houses, blank unknown houses, were also shouldering up to gaze at the disaster. "But this is not the place!" remonstrated the Professor. "This is a house that has burnt down!"

"Parbleu," replied the chauffeur, still humoring him.

The Professor's temples were bursting. "But was it—was it—was this the Hotel Arcadie?"

The chauffeur shrugged again and pointed to the name.

"When—did it burn?"

"Early yesterday."

"And the landlady—the person who kept it?"

"Ah, çà—"

"But how, in the name of pity, can I find out?"

The chauffeur seemed moved by his distress. "Let Monsieur reassure himself. There was no loss of life. If Monsieur had any friends or relations—"

The Professor waved away the suggestion.

"We could, of course, address ourselves to the police," the chauffeur continued.



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The police! The mere sound of the word filled his hearer with dismay. Explain to the police about that money? How could he—and in his French? He turned cold at the idea, and in his dread of seeing himself transported to the *commissariat* by the too-sympathetic driver, he hurriedly paid the latter off, and remained alone gazing through the gate at the drenched and smoking monument of his folly.

The money—try to get back the money? It had seemed almost hopeless before; now the attempt could only expose him to all the mysterious perils of the law. He saw himself interrogated, investigated, his passport seized, his manuscript confiscated, and every hope of rational repose and work annihilated for months to come. He felt himself curiously eyed by the policeman who was guarding the ruins, and turned from the scene of the disaster almost as hurriedly as the young man whom he had taken—no doubt erroneously—for Taber Tring.

Having reached another quarter of the town, he sat down on a bench to take stock of his situation.

It was exactly what he had done two days before when, on arriving at Monte Carlo, he had found that he had missed the motorbus; and the association of ideas once more came to his rescue.

Gradually there rose in his mind a faint wavering vision of a young woman, pearly and furred and scented, precipitately descending from his compartment, and as she did so, cramming a bank-note into his hand.

"The Princess—the Princess—they call me Betsy at the dressmaker's—" That was as far as the clue went; but presently the Professor remembered that his companion had left the train at Cannes, and it became dimly certain to him that his only hope of clearing his overburdened conscience would be to take the train to that place, and there prosecute his almost hopeless search.

NOT till he found himself seated in the train did the full horror of his situation break on the Professor. Then, for an hour, he contemplated it in all its intricate enormity, saw himself as a man dishonored, ruined (for he now remembered the amount of the sum he had to account for), and, worse still, severed from his best-loved work for a period incalculably long. For after he had struggled through the first difficulties, he would have to settle down to the slow task of reimbursement, and he knew that to earn enough money to repay what he had lost, he must abandon serious scientific work such as he was now engaged in, and probably stoop—abominable thought—to writing popular "science" articles in one of the illustrated magazines. Such a job had once been offered him on very handsome terms, and contemptuously rejected; and the best he could now hope was that there was still an opening for him somewhere between the etiquette column and the notes on face-powder and bathing tights.

Arrived at Cannes, he found his way to what appeared to be the fashionable shopping street, and exteriorizing his attention by an extreme effort of the will, he began to go the rounds of the dressmaking establishments.

At every one he was received with distinguished politeness, and every one, by some curious coincidence, had a Betsy to offer him. As the Betsies were all young, fluffy and rosy, considerable offense was caused by his rapid rejection of them, and he tried to close his ears to the crude and disobliging comments which on each occasion attended his retreat. But he had by this time regained a sufficiently clear vision of the Princess to be sure that she was not concealed behind any of the youthful substitutes proposed to him. In despair he issued from the last shop, and again sat himself down to consider.

As he did so, his mind gave a queer click, and the doors of his inner consciousness again swung open. But this time it was only to draw him back into the creative world from which he had been so violently ejected. He had suddenly seen a point to be made in the Einstein controversy, and he began to fumble for a paper on which to jot it down. He found only one, the closely scribbled flap of a torn envelope on which, during the journey to Cannes, he had calculated and recalculated the extent of the sum he would have to raise to reimburse the Princess; but possibly there might be a clear space on the other side. He turned it over, and there read, in a tall, slanting hand:

*"Princesse Balalatsky,  
"Villa Mon Caprice, route de Californie."*

HE started to his feet, and glanced about him frantically for a taxi. He had no idea where the route de Californie was, but in his desperate circumstances, it seemed as easy to hire a taxi for a five minutes' transit as for a long expedition. Besides, it was the only way he knew of being sure of reaching his destination; and to do so as soon as possible was now a fixed obsession.

The taxi carried him a long way; back through the whole length of the town, out on a flat white dusty road, and then up and up between walls overhung with luxuriant verdure till suddenly, at a turn, it stood still with a violent jerk.

The Professor looked out, and saw himself confronted by the expressive countenance of Mr. Taber Tring.

"Oh, my God—you again!" shrieked the young man, turning suddenly white with fury—or was it rather with fear?

"Why do you say *again*?" questioned the Professor; but his interlocutor, taking to his heels with unaccountable velocity, had already disappeared down a verdant byway.

The Professor leaned back in the taxi in speechless amazement. He was sure now that the "again" referred to their previous encounter that morning at Monte Carlo, and he could only conclude that it had become a fixed habit of Taber Tring's to run away whenever they met, and that he ran a great deal too fast for the Professor ever to hope to overtake him.

"Well," said the driver, "there's a gentleman who isn't pleased. He thought I had no fare, and expected to get a lift up to the top of this mountain."

"I should have been happy to give him a lift," said the Professor rather wistfully; to which the driver replied: "He must be a mile off by this time. He didn't seem to fancy your looks."

There was no controverting this statement, mortifying as it was, and they continued their ascent till a gateway impressively crowned by heraldic lions admitted them to terraced gardens above which a villa of ample proportions looked forth upon the landscape.

The Professor was by this time so steeled to the unexpected that he hardly paused to consider the strange incongruity between the Princess' account of her fortunes and the setting in which she lived. He had read "*Mon Caprice*" on the gate, and that was the name on the envelope he had found in his pocket. With a resolute hand he rang the bell and asked a resplendent footman if the Princess Balalatsky were at home.

He was shown through a long succession of drawing-rooms, in the last of which the Princess rose from the depths of a broad divan. She was dressed in black draperies, half-transparent—no, half-translucent; and she stood before the Professor in all the formidable completeness of her beauty.

Instantly his mind clicked again, and a voice thrilled up at him from the depths: "You always *knew* you could still recognize a beautiful woman when you saw one;"

but he closed his ears to the suggestion and advanced awkwardly toward the lady.

Before he could take more than three steps, she was at his side, almost at his feet; her burning clasp was on his wrists, and her eyes were consuming him like coals of fire.

"Master! *Maestro!* Disguise is useless! You choose to come unannounced; but I was sure you would answer my appeal, and I should have recognized you anywhere, and among any number of people." She lifted his astonished hand to her lips. "It is the penalty of genius," she breathed.

"But—" gasped the Professor.

A scented finger was laid across his lips. "Hush; not yet. Let me tell you first why I ventured to write to you." She drew him gently down to an armchair beside the divan, and herself sank orientally into its pillows. "I thought I had exhausted all the emotions of life. At my age—is it not a tragedy? But I was mistaken. It is true that I had tried philosophy, marriage, mathematics, divorce, sculpture and love; but I had never attempted the stage. How long it sometimes takes to discover one's real vocation! No doubt you may have gone through the same uncertainties yourself. At any rate, my gift for the drama did not reveal itself till three months ago, and I have only just completed my play, 'The Scarlet Cataract,' a picture of my life, as the title suggests—and which, my friends tell me, is not without dramatic merit. In fact, if I were to listen to them—"

The Professor struggled from his seat. His old fear of her madness had returned. He began very mildly: "It is quite natural you should mistake me for some one else—"

With an inimitable gesture she waved the interruption aside. "But what I want to explain is that, of course, the leading rôle can have but one interpreter—myself. The things happened to me: who else could possibly know how to act them? Therefore if I appeal to you—on my knees, Illustrious Impresario!—it is in my double character as dramatist and tragédienne; for in spite of appearances, my life has been a tragedy, as you will acknowledge if you will let me outline its principal events in a few words."

But here she had to pause a second for breath, and the Professor, on his feet, actually shouted out his protest. "Madam, I cannot let you go on another moment, first because I've heard the story of your life already, and secondly because I'm not the man you suppose."

The Princess turned deadly pale. "Impostor!" she hissed, and reached for the embroidered bell-rope among the draperies of the divan.

HER agitation had the curious effect of calming the Professor. "You had better not send me away," he said, "till you learn why I am here. I am the unhappy man to whom, the day before yesterday, you intrusted a hundred-franc note which you asked me to stake for you at Monte Carlo. Unfortunately I could not recall your name or address, and I have been hunting for you through all the dressmakers' establishments in Cannes."

The instant lighting-up of her face was a sight so lovely that he almost forgot his apprehensions and his shame.

"The dressmakers' shops? Ah—in search of 'Betsy'! It is true, I was obliged to act as a mannequin for one day; but since then my fortunes have miraculously changed—changed, thanks to you; for now," the Princess continued with enthusiasm, "I do at last recognize my good angel, my benefactor, and ask myself how I could have failed to know you again, how I could have taken you for a vulgar theatrical manager, you, a man of genius and a philosopher! Can you ever forgive me? For I owe you everything—everything—everything!" she sobbed out, again almost at his knees.



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His self-possession continued to increase in proportion to her agitation. He actually risked laying a hand on her arm and pressing her mildly back among her cushions.

"Only a change of pronouns," he said, sighing, "is necessary to the complete accuracy of your last statement."

But she was off again on a new tack. "That blessed hundred-franc note! From the moment when you took it from me, as I got out of the train, my luck miraculously and completely changed. I knew you were going to win some money for me; but how could I have imagined the extent of the fortune you were to heap at my feet?"

A COLD sweat broke out over the Professor's trembling body. She knew, then—again her infernal intuition had pierced his secret! In the train had she not discovered his name, identified him as the author of "The Elimination of Phenomena," and guessed that he was actually engaged in the composition of another work? At the moment he had fancied that there was a plausible explanation for each of these discoveries; but he now felt that her powers of divination were in need of no outward aid. She had risen from her seat and was once more in possession of his hands.

"You have come to be thanked—and I do thank you!" Her heavy lashes glittered with tears which seemed to merge with the drops of moisture rolling down the Professor's agonized brow.

"Don't—don't, I beg." He freed himself. "If you'll only let me speak—let me explain—"

She raised a reproachful finger. "Let you belittle yourself? Let you reject my gratitude? No—no! Nothing that you can say can make any difference. The gypsy in the Caucasus told me long ago what you were going to do for me. And now that you have done it, you want to stifle the thanks on my lips!"

"But you have nothing to thank me for. I have made no money for you. On the contrary, I—"

"Hush, hush! Such words are blasphemy. Look about you at all this luxury, this beauty. I expected to have to leave it tomorrow. And thanks to you, wealth has poured in on me at the moment when I thought I was face to face with ruin."

"Madam, you must let me undeceive you. I don't know who can have brought you such an erroneous report." The Professor glanced about him in acute distress, seeking to escape from her devouring scrutiny. "It is true that I did make a considerable sum

for you, but I—I afterward lost it. To my shame be it said."

The Princess hardly appeared to hear him. Tears of gratitude still rained down her face. "Lost it? A little more, a little less—what does it matter? In my present pecuniary situation, nothing of that sort counts. I am rich—rich for life! I should in fact," she continued with a gush of candor, "be an absolutely happy woman if I could only find an impresario who would stage my play." She suddenly lifted her enchanting eyes to his. "I wonder, by the way," she proposed, "if you would let me read it to you now?"

"Oh, no, no," the Professor almost shouted; and then, becoming aware of the offense his words were likely to give, he added precipitately: "Before we turn to any other subject, you must really let me tell you just how much money I owe you, and what were the unfortunate circumstances in which—"

But he was conscious that the Princess was no longer listening to him. A new light had dawned in her face, and the glow of it was already drying her tears. Slim, palpitating and girlish, she turned toward one of the tall French windows opening onto the terrace.

"My fiancé—your young compatriot! Here he is! Oh, how happy I am to bring you together!" she exclaimed.

The Professor followed her glance with a stare of fresh amazement. Through the half-open window a young man in tennis flannels had strolled familiarly into the room.

"My Taber," the Princess breathed, "this is my benefactor—our benefactor—this is—"

TABER TRING gently removed the perfect arms which were already tightening about his neck. "I know who he is," he said, in a hard, high tone. "That's why I've been running away from him ever since early this morning."

His good-humored boyish face was absolutely decomposed by distress. Without vouchsafing the least attention to the Princess, he stood pallidly but resolutely facing her visitor.

"I've been running for all I was worth, at least till a quarter of an hour ago. Then I suddenly pulled up short and said to myself: 'Taber Tring, this won't do. You were born in the Middle West, but your parents came from New England, and now's the time to prove it if you're ever going to. Stern and rockbound coast, and Mayflower and all the rest of it. If there's anything in it, it ought to come out now.'"

And, by George, it *did*; and here I am, ready to make a clean breast of it."

He drew a silk handkerchief from his pocket, and wiped his brow, which was as damp with agony as the Professor's.

But the Professor's patience had reached its final limit, and he was determined, whatever happened, to hold all interrupters at bay till he had made a clean breast of his own.

"I don't know, sir," he said, "why you avoided my presence this morning, nor why you now seek it; but since you are connected with this lady by so close a tie, there is no reason why I should not continue in your presence what I had begun to tell her. I repeat then, madam, that with this hundred-franc note in my hand, I approached a table and staked the sum with results so unexpectedly and incredibly favorable that I left the gaming-rooms just before midnight in possession of—"

"Ninety-nine thousand, seven hundred francs," Taber Tring interposed.

The Professor received this with a gasp of astonishment; but everything that was happening was so foreign to all the laws of probability as experienced at Purewater that it did not long arrest his attention.

"You have stated the sum accurately," he said; "but you do not know that I am no longer in possession of a penny of it."

"Oh, don't I!" groaned Taber Tring, wiping a fresh outbreak of moisture from his forehead.

The Professor stopped short. "You do know? Ah, but to be sure. You were yourself a fellow-boarder at Arcadie. You were perhaps under its roof when that disastrous fire broke out and destroyed the whole of the large sum of money I had so negligently left—"

"Under the door!" shrieked Taber Tring. "Under the door of your room, which happened to be the one next to mine."

A light began to dawn on the Professor. "Is it possible that you were the neighbor whose unseasonable agitation during the small hours of the night caused me, in the total absence of towels or other available material, to stuff the money in question under the crack of the door in order to continue my intellectual labors undisturbed?"

"That's me," said Taber Tring sullenly.

But the Princess, who had been listening to the Professor's long disquisition with a look of lovely bewilderment gradually verging on boredom, here intervened with a sudden flash of attention.

"What sort of noises proceeded from my Taber's room at that advanced hour of the

## Hitting the High Spots

That's what Courtney Ryley Cooper is doing as you read this paragraph. On the fifteenth of June, with three pack-horses, and himself and an old mountain friend astride a pair of trail ponies, he fared forth from his Colorado home for a six-weeks' trip of exploration, into sections of the Rocky Mountain region that have rarely, if ever, been penetrated, save perhaps by Indians; for strange as it may seem, there are such sections in America's vast midcontinent playground.

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night?" she inquisitorially demanded of the Professor.

"Oh, shucks!" said her betrothed in a weary tone. "Aren't they alike, every one of 'em?" He turned to the Professor. "I dare say I was making a noise. I was about desperate. Stony-broke, and didn't know which way to turn next. I guess you'd have made a noise in my place."

The Professor felt a sudden sympathy for the stricken youth. "I'm sorry for you—very sorry," he said. "If I had known your situation, I should have tried to master my impatience, and should probably not have crammed the money under the door; in which case it would not have been destroyed in the fire—"

("How like the reflections of a Chinese sage!" the Princess admiringly murmured.)

"Destroyed in the fire? It wasn't," said Taber Tring incisively.

The Professor reeled back and was obliged to support himself upon the nearest chair.

"It wasn't?"

"Trust me," said the young man. "I was there, and I stole it."

"You stole it—his money?" The Princess instantly flung herself on his bosom. "To save your beloved from ruin? Oh, how Christlike—how Dostoyevskian!" She addressed herself with streaming eyes to the Professor. "Oh, spare him, sir, for heaven's sake, spare him! What shall I do to avert your vengeance? Shall I offer myself in the streets of Cannes? I will do anything to atone to you for his heroic gesture in stealing your money—"

Taber Tring again put her gently aside. "Do drop it, Betsy. This is not a woman's job. I stole that money in order to gamble with it, and I've got to pay it back, and all that I won with it too." He paused and faced about on the Professor. "Isn't that so, sir?" he questioned. "I've been puzzling over it day and night for the last two days, and I can't figure it out any other way. Hard on you, Betsy, just as we thought our fortune was made; but my firm conviction, Professor Hibbart, as a man of New England stock, is that at this moment I owe you the sum of one million, seven hundred and fifty thousand francs."

"My God!" screamed the Professor. "What system did you play?"

MR. TRING'S open countenance snapped shut like a steel trap. "That's my secret," he said politely; and the Professor mentally acknowledged that it was.

"I must ask you," the young man pursued, "to be good enough either to disprove or to confirm my estimate of my indebtedness to you. How much should you consider that you owed if you had stolen anybody's money and made a lot more with it? Only the sum stolen, or the whole? There's my point."

"But I did! I have!" cried the Professor. "Did what?"

"Exactly what you have done. Stole—that is, gambled with a sum of money entrusted to me for the purpose, and won the large amount you have correctly stated. It is true," the Professor continued, "that I had no intention of appropriating a penny of it; but, supposing that my culpable negligence had caused the whole sum to be destroyed by fire, I considered myself—"

"Well?" panted Taber Tring.

"As indebted for the entire amount to this lady here—"

Taber Tring's face became illuminated with sudden comprehension.

"Holy Moses! You don't mean to say all that money under the door belonged to Betsy?"

"Every cent of it, in my opinion," said the Professor firmly; and the two men stood and stared at each other.

"But, good gracious," the Princess intervened, "then nobody has stolen anything!"



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THE load which had crushed the Professor to earth rolled from his shoulders, and he lifted the head of a free man. "So it would seem."

But Taber Tring could only ejaculate once again: "Holy Moses!"

"Then we are rich once more—is it not so, my Taber?" The Princess leaned a thoughtful head upon her hand. "Do you know, I could almost regret it? Yes, I regret, dear friends, that you are both blameless, and that no sacrifice will be demanded of me. It would have been so beautiful if you had both sinned, and I had also had to sin to save you. But on the other hand," she reflected, with lifted eyes and a smile like heaven, "I shall now be able to have my play brought out at my own expense. And for that," she cried, again possessing herself of Professor Hibbart's hands, "for that too I have to thank you! And this is the only way I know of doing it."

She flung her arms around his neck and lifted her lips to his; and the exonerated and emancipated Professor took like a man what she offered.

"And now," she cried, "for my other hero!" and caught her betrothed to her heart.

These effusions were interrupted by the entrance of the resplendent footman, who surveyed them without surprise or disapproval.

"There is at the door," he announced, "a young lady of the name of Betsy who is asking for Monsieur." He indicated the Professor. "She would give no other name; she said that was enough. She knows Monsieur has been seeking her everywhere in Cannes, and she is in despair at having missed him; but at the time she was engaged with another client."

The Professor turned pale, and Taber Tring's left lid sketched a tentative wink.

But the Princess intervened in her most princely manner. "Of course! My name is Betsy, and you were seeking for me at all the dressmakers!" She turned to the footman with her smile of benediction. "Tell the young lady," she said, "that Monsieur in his turn is engaged with another client, who begs her to accept this slight compensation for her trouble." She slipped a hoop of jade from her wrist, and the footman withdrew with the token.

"And now," said the Princess, "as it is past three o'clock, we ought really to be thinking of zakouska."

## REDDY ROLLS HER OWN

(Continued from page 93)

although he would ordinarily not have permitted wild horses to drag him to such an affair. He did not tell her that the reason he was going was to size up Archibald.

Such excitement as girls feel over a silly country dance! Wally felt terribly old as Reddy chatted on about her dress and her slippers and all the rest of it.

"As though your life depended on that dance," he told her.

"You don't know how much I have at stake," she replied gravely. And at his smile: "Love's pretty important, you will admit."

He told her she did not know the meaning of the word, that she would be in love a dozen times before she met the right man.

"Not me, Wally. You don't begin to know the kind of person I am. That's the way all the Red Peppers are. They fall in love terribly and take it awfully hard when they're crossed."

"But my dear—you're just a child—"

"Nearly nineteen. And I've been going around with boys since I was eleven. And in all that time I've only had one crush."

Still, he knew better. Somehow he was certain she would get over Archibald.

So, although he felt sorry for her the day of the dance when she came over, all woes begone, to say that she and Archibald had quarreled and he was not going with her, still, he felt it was all for the best. In fact, he felt a secret satisfaction that it was all over. He had known that sooner or later the end would come. But it had all been very real to poor little Reddy, and he hated to see her so cut up. He knew how she had been looking forward to that dance—and all that fussing over the dress and all. Those things did mean a lot in a girl's life—especially a very young girl like Reddy.

He felt in a way responsible, too—because, innocently enough, he had been the cause of the quarrel. It seemed the ridiculous fellow had taken umbrage at Reddy's friendship with him, Wally. And she, with proper spirit, had sent him about his business.

"But just the same," she confided to him, "I think maybe I'd better go and make up with him."

"No—no—you mustn't do that. That is—I shouldn't think your pride would let you."

"But Wally, I've looked forward so to the dance. And it's the very last of the sea-

son. Next week everybody'll be going back to town—"

Wally realized, with something of a shock, that Labor Day had crept upon him unawares, and that in a week or two he too would be going.

"Of course you must go to the dance. But can't you go without him?"

"And let him see he was the only man I could get? I've dropped everybody else—that is, everybody but you."

"Well, why don't you come with me?" he asked. "I've got a ticket, and I'm not taking anybody."

Why not, indeed? Her joy was more than enough reward for any effort it might cost him to appear at a dance in Kindie Beach with Nellie Pepper's sister. She raved on for a moment, then turned to him seriously.

"Of course, I don't expect you to call for me, Wally." Heavens! He had not even thought of that! "I wouldn't think of putting you to all that trouble—just as if you were an ordinary young man."

Her attitude of worship made him feel ashamed. "Don't be silly, my dear. Whoever heard of a man not calling for a girl he was going to escort to a dance?"

And he did—although he would not have believed anything could ever have dragged him into the Pepper home again. And in such a capacity! Gallant to little Reddy.

But it was not half so bad as he had expected, and on the whole he was glad he went. For Mrs. Pepper made him feel how very glad she was to see him, and how much she had always thought of him. And the encounter with Nellie Warren was far from the nightmare he had always dreaded. It was, in fact, quite casual. And he met Jim Warren, too, and that was not at all terrible, either. All in all, when he left the Pepper home, with Mrs. Pepper's playful admonition to be careful of her little girl, and Reddy hanging confidently on his arm, it was with a feeling of lightness he had not known in years: the feeling of a man who has cast aside a painful burden—and seen a troublesome ghost forever laid.

Wally actually didn't mind the dance—partly as a sort of reaction and partly through Reddy's pleasure. How that girl enjoyed dancing! And how radiantly beautiful that enjoyment made her! He had never seen her so lovely as she looked in that white dress, her arms and throat bare.



her hair with a band of sapphires woven through it, and that starry look in her eyes. He had quite the most beautiful girl in the room, he decided impartially. Which is always an agreeable sensation for a man.

IT was quite an enjoyable evening, up to a certain point. People seemed very glad to see him, in spite of his own lack of friendliness. But he wished they wouldn't treat him as a sort of demigod.

And Reddy would dance with nobody but him. As she was a splendid dancer, and seemed to be enjoying it, he did not find within himself any need to urge her to do otherwise.

But suddenly she said, after an absence during which he believed she had been powdering her nose: "If you want me, you'll find me out in the farthest summerhouse."

"What?" he demanded stupidly.

"Archibald wants to speak to me," she explained. "I knew you wouldn't mind."

Of course he did not. Why should he? Just the same, he wished she would make it snappy. There was nothing for him to do while waiting for her. And suddenly it occurred to him that he had always been right. Dances were stupid things. And nobody went to them but idiots.

Naturally he was not going out to any summerhouse after her. She could stay there as long as she liked! . . .

But after all, she was in his care. And she was very young. And he did not know this Archibald—nor trust him. So when she did not return after what seemed a truly interminable time, Wally felt constrained to go after her.

To his surprise and relief, she was alone. Crumpled in one corner of the summerhouse, she did not look up when he came in. From the muffled reply she gave when he called her, he gathered that she was crying. But it was too dark to see.

He sat down beside her, intending to put an arm around her consolingly. But either she mistook his gesture, or her emotion was too much for her, for before he knew it, she was in his arms.

"Oh, Wally," she cried, "he's gone, and he says he'll never, never see me any more." His arm tightened about her.

"Oh, Wally, he was just awful. He said I was in love with you—he could tell it—but you were just playing with me—"

"Idiot!" said Wally between his teeth, the while he patted with little pats the disconsolate girl in his arms.

"And that isn't all. He said I'd been falling in love with you all summer, and you'd been leading me on—he could see it coming—and tonight, my being here with you and all just *proved* it. And when I danced with you, it was *disgraceful* the way I hung around your neck and gazed up at you adoringly. And anybody could see you were letting me make a little f-fool of myself over you—and oh, Wally, I feel terrible."

Wally did not know what to do, but only held her closer, murmuring, "There—there!" into the fragrant mass of her hair.

"And Wally—you don't know the worst. He gave me my choice of him—or you—and when I wouldn't give you up,"—she burrowed deep into his shoulder,—"*that* was the end—"

"I wouldn't give him another thought," he soothed. "He's just not worth it."

"B-but, Wally—you don't understand." The words came muffled through the cloth of his coat. "The worst is—I didn't *mind* giving him up, really. . . . I'd a *hundred* times rather give him up—than you."

She had lifted her head from his shoulder at the last word, and as he bent over her, in some unaccountable way their lips met.

"Oh, Wally!" she cried, straining against him so hard that the three pins did come out of her hair and it did tumble—all about his hands and arms. He ran his fingers



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(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24)

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through it—as he had imagined doing, that day when he had first seen it down. It was as if he could feel the color of it. Suddenly, stooping, he kissed the soft, vibrant mass in his hands.

"Oh, Wally," she laughed, a trifle hysterically, "you will have me falling in love with you! And you know what I am when I fall in love."

"I don't know anything about it," he denied.

"Have you forgotten how determined I get—"

"And have you forgotten who taught you all your little bag of tricks—and who could see through any of them—in a minute?"

There was a little pause—and then she said, with a suggestion of a catch in her voice:

"Suppose—suppose you found out I wasn't anything like you thought? That I was a terrible fraud—and unscrupulous—and—everything you hate."

He laughed. "I've had a chance to watch you all summer. I know you inside out."

"But," she persisted, "suppose I'd been fooling you all along?"

## THE LITTLE DEVIL

(Continued from page 55)

pool-room habitués, young professional men and crap-shooters, housewives and suffragists, divorcees, roller-skaters and cripples who sell lead pencils.

It has an unemployed problem, charitable boards, a city-hall scandal, an appropriation for a new public library, a broadcasting studio, a young married set, a bridge set, a cultured set, real-estate subdivisions and retired Congressmen. It has, in fact, all the earmarks, trademarks and birthmarks of any average Midwestern town of some sixty-thousand inhabitants.

On some of its elm-shaded streets a goodly number of substantial and handsome old houses have given way to apartment-buildings. But a goodly number still remain.

Around ten o'clock that night, Arthur Kemmer walked up one such handsome, shadowy street. He knew that he was about to do a foolish thing. For a little fool of a girl; a girl with whom, too, he had only a perfunctory acquaintance; a girl with whom, moreover, he had no desire to become better acquainted!

At his first meeting with her, when he arrived in this growing town six months previously, he had not cared for her. Distinctly not!

Meadowtown, however, was the sort of town that appealed to a young professional man as an iced and sugared grapefruit might on a June morning. It was live, extending, worth-while. His future, with his college friend Burt's, would lie in its future like a comb of honey in a hive.

And tonight he was endangering that future. He realized it. What he had in mind to do might bring dire consequences. In fact, being a bright-minded young man, he told himself that the chance of such consequences was about ten to seven.

IT was true that in a way he was self-protected. What a poor devil of a hobo, or any stranger, could not do without inevitable disaster, Arthur Kemmer, member of the Rotary, Commercial, University, Architectural, Art and other clubs, might do, on a ten to seven shot.

Caught entering the Westby residence, in the absence of son, mistress and servants, he could offer any one of several excuses.

He could protest that he thought he was entering the house of a friend, pleading his six brief months' knowledge of the town. Or he could pretend, delicately, that he was a little under the weather. Oh, Volstead! He could call upon half a hundred friends

"No insult, honey, but you're just not clever enough."

"But if I were—diabolically clever. If I'd been scheming to make you fall in love with me all summer?"

He laughed harder than ever. "If there were a girl that clever, I should simply have to have her." And he kissed her again.

She drew away.

"What's the matter?" he demanded.

"Nothing—only what you told me yourself—that I shouldn't let a man kiss me—unless I knew he was really in love with me."

"Reddy—come here!" he commanded, and drew her toward him roughly.

"Oh, Wally," she sighed, "if you're going to be masterful, I don't know what I ought to do."

"Do?" he demanded. "You'll do exactly nothing. You remember, I told you once, when the right man came along, he'd engineer matters without any help from you."

It was too dark to see the expression in her eyes. The probabilities are, even if he had, it would have been too late. For it is said that red pepper will blind any man.

to help him by their united testimony that he had never done such a thing before, that he was not the sort of person to be a law-breaker. They would say, and believe, that he must have been ill.

And there was the good old amnesia bunk. One must have a certain amount of social standing to use that with success. But he had the standing.

It was true that he hoped most sincerely that he would need neither yarn nor friends. Indeed, had he actually feared the worst, he would have been far from this old tree-shadowy street. He had, as has been said, a clear mind. It was this possession which gave him the right to disapprove of girls like Linny.

He had evidenced his disapproval of her. For all his intimacy with Burt, and the ensuing social contacts with Burt's relatives, in six months he had said possibly ten words to Linny Gray. Of course, she belonged to a far younger crowd than that which had embraced him and Burt. This Hugg and this Bat were mere infants compared to himself. He recalled vaguely having met Hugg once or twice—a sallow, pert little brat. Bat too, a cub who heehawed in taxicabs.

Linny was one of a long line, a horde, with whom he had come into irritating contact during the recent few years. Perky, cool-eyed, thin things, with flat hips, flat breasts, flat minds and flat vanity-bags. All of them reeking with perfect approval of themselves, of their thin, bizarre, cool-eyed girl friends, and of their woolen-sweatered jumble of fat and lank boy friends.

He had met them in offices, street-cars, restaurants, factories, theaters, and even on the rare occasions when he went to church with his mother back in his home town farther east.

At intervals, when in a congenial crowd, or even alone, he had pondered seriously on what kind of children would issue from such mothers. Not his children, he had declared.

He knew why he was doing this foolish action this night. He had reasoned it out: Partly because of his friendship for Burt; partly because the girl herself, hysterically shrilling into that phone, had been such a little ninny. What he was about to do was like—well, it was like helping a little chattering, muddy dog out of a ditch. The dog wasn't actually worth muddying one's hands and cuffs for; and it had had no business to get into the ditch; but who could pass with a comfortable mind, leaving it there?

Besides, he had rather pitied poor old

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*All further particulars relating to the new plan of THE BLUE BOOK MAGAZINE to publish "actual fact" stories of Remarkable True Experiences for which checks will be sent to the writers on August 1, 1925, will be found in the August issue of*

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Gray, the mortified father, and the white-haired scholarly granduncle who, with his friend Hoterick, had subsided into such awkward silence after Gray had spoken his paternal mind. Arthur decided that he himself, in Gray's place, would have let the girl pull off her stunt. After all, it seemed to be quite a bad mess. Publicity might result—if no one did anything to stay Hugg's vengeance.

Kemmer felt that he would be a little disappointed if the night ended without his fist landing on the jaw of either Hugg or Bat. Girls like Linny Gray brought their mishaps upon themselves. Still, every man knows that certain others of his sex need all the lickings that ever come their way—and more. His own fists had been nicely known at college and in France. They could do service yet.

He would put the recovered property, in a plain paper wrapper addressed to Linny, on the Gray hall table. Adroitly! No need for Linny to know who had served her. The little blasé ninny might misunderstand his service.

He walked faster. He had no watch. One reads too many detective stories to allow a betraying tick-tick to break into the silence of a dark room. Nor had he a cigarette along.

ELM STREET, belonging to the older, best part of town, had lawns wide and thick, with privet and barberry hedges, hydrangeas and caladium. Bat belonged to what was known in Meadowstown as an old family. His mother was the kind of widow for whom safe-deposit boxes and trust companies were invented. But Arthur understood well enough that only sons like Bat can spend far more money than can be cajoled out of a conservative widowed mother.

With humor not mellowed by this understanding, he walked to the front steps and

doors of the large brick house. Front doors, be it remarked! No need to skulk until it was necessary. And later, an open approach at the start might be recalled as legal support.

He rang the bell. No answer. Again! None. Good! Faithful Anne had not failed a friend. He slipped around the terrace—to such a name it was justly entitled, with its massive stone balustrade—and readily made his way to the hall window which Linny had mentioned. The sill was high. But the feat was trifling for a lithe man in the thirties. He stepped on the outjutting stone trim of the wall which Linny had spoken about. A pity, he took time to moralize, that shrewd little things like Linny didn't put their wits to better use. Although (this reflection at once followed) they really were not shrewd; a darting and superficial sharpness was merely whetted deceptively by their constant trickery against each other, parents and Mr. Volstead.

The window was unlocked. He made his way down an unlighted hall and reached a pair of folding doors on his left.

Even without Linny's description he could have found the dark library. These handsome old houses follow the plans of their particular year of erection. He was architect enough to state almost the exact date, fifty years back, of this one's plans. Library, parlor, back parlor, handsome old oak-trimmed din'g-room, heavy velvet curtains at all doorways, and all the doorways double—these were almost like established stage properties.

Pausing before the proper doorway, he sent his pocket flash up and down the hall with excess caution. But emptiness rang like a gong throughout the house.

In the doorway, he was about to flash the little beam over the room that he was entering, when a sound stayed his hand.

One hand grasping a heavy curtain-fold, he waited, startled. He could not place or

## Who Is Will James?

One day about a year ago the editor of a distinguished American magazine received a manuscript and a set of drawings in a parcel that bore the postmark of a tiny Nevada town. The manuscript related to the riding of bucking horses, and the lively illustrations were in perfect supplement to the text. The writer-artist's name was quite unknown to the editor, and naturally he took the "style" of the manuscript—that is to say, certain racy twists of expression and occasional grammatical reversions—to be assumed. But the fact is, Will James, cowboy, writes as he talks. It is as the range talks—the sort of talk you'll hear on top rails of corrals, and at the chutes during the great rodeos. For Will is precisely what he seems to be—the very real thing. He's been a rider from Dome, Arizona, to Alberta, and he's riding still. "Hope to see you in Cheyenne this summer," he wrote a friend not long ago. His first book, "Cowboys North and South," was a great success, and there's another volume being made ready for publication sometime early this coming winter.

define the sound. He fancied his ears deceived him.

And here again—so he amused himself—he could almost say beforehand how wall and shelf, bookcase and desk were placed, of what dark polished wood they were composed. Handsome furniture all would be—that was the kind an older, staid generation affected. The light would come from a window over the left massive leather arm of a great easy-chair; the chandelier would—ah!

He said to himself, almost at once, that his lucky star must be in the ascendant for this night. Otherwise his fancy for musing about old furniture would not have stayed his light. Otherwise he would not have chanced to station himself within grasp of a heavy velvet curtain.

For he had heard a small, sly movement in that room, and learned therefrom that it had an occupant. Had his entrance been heard? To the left he edged four inches, drawing the velvet folds about his person.

Whoever was in the room had no desire to be known. The one sly sound was followed by silence. Arthur waited.

He feared that it might be Linny. He had not much faith in a portly parent's ability to keep a girl locked in her room. He wished that this lack of faith had come to him sooner.

He regretted exceedingly the excuse he had made to Burt, an hour back, for getting away. He had said that a headache needed to be walked off. Engrossed in his drawings, Burt had nodded absently, not raising his green eye-shade.

**T**HERE is no regret, of course, like that of the liar about to be found out. Kemmer wished devoutly that he was back at the desk opposite Burt, wearing his own green eye-shade. He began to blush over what Burt would think. Linny would blab the matter abroad, with laughter or a blasé shrug of her thin shoulders. He'd cut a figure! He'd be—

There came a second shock. By this time, without the least sound, he had practically shrouded himself in the velvet curtain of the doorway. It was well. Some one else had crawled through the hall window and was approaching silently down the hall. And that some one, coming, coming closer, was about to enter—*was entering* the library. Kemmer, almost flattened against the jamb, had actual but unperceived contact with the person entering.

By this time he was mastering the dark in that small degree of which the optical nerve is capable when light is nearly lacking. But it was more by a concentration of the six senses than by sight or by hearing that Kemmer knew that this third person—counting himself and some one already in the room—was making careful way toward the most important object in the room, the handsome old desk.

Then he heard again that first small, sly sound! But now, instead of alarming him,—oh, the courage induced by a curtain!—it gave him a malicious satisfaction. Number One—so he designated whoever it might be, man or girl, who was first on the premises—was undoubtedly as panic-stricken as himself, Number Two. And Number Three seemed to have been galvanized in his tracks.

Arthur could almost place the small, sly sound of Number One, too. It was opposite the door—at what he would say was the southeast corner of the room, about where the handsome old leather divan would naturally be placed.

And then he had another shock. Number Two, had he fatuously styled himself? Surely there had been a squirming movement in the northwest corner of the room. That would make four people. He became seriously uneasy. Was this a joke on the part of that Linny? Was there a whole



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crowd assembled to take care of Hugg or Bat or whoever was the bait for the gathering?

He realized that he would be in a ridiculous position if a horde of the young devils had gathered and should find him. His spine had a chill feeling. The chill feeling spread from spine to knees. As still as the door-jamb itself, he stood. For now a fifth person was coming down the hall. And a fifth person was stepping noiselessly through the doorway into the library, almost touching him. He refrained from breathing.

**FIVE!** Man does not like his kind when it is several, and invisible, and hushed of breath! Old fears, primitive fears, crawl from subconscious cellars and remind a soul of ancient perils, forgotten frights.

The fifth person who had entered the room must have gained some sort of shelter. There came a small sound, like a suppressed cough, from the southwest corner. The last to enter must have got behind a chair. A heavy, handsome old rocker seemed to have been moved perhaps the sixteenth of an inch. Our fathers' rocking-chairs were not moved even so little a distance without uttering a dignified creak.

Arthur Kemmer hastily made up his mind. Thank heaven he had had gumption enough—no, to be honest, luck enough—to stay at the door. He might be able to unsnatch himself from the velvet curtain, gain the hall, sprint down it and jump through the window to safe lawn and then street—and then those safe bachelor quarters where his good friend Burt was engrossed in assiduous labor.

Let the five—Five! Maybe fifty were crouching under wastebaskets or perched on old walnut bookshelves. Well, let 'em all try to stop him!

It is painful to set down the unchivalrous thought that hereupon came to a young man who would have described himself as a decent enough member of society. But he reflected with satisfaction that if any of these unknown and presumably malicious persons were young women, and they tried to spoil his get-away, he would have an honest and beautiful excuse for shaking one or two, or as many as he could manage, until their pretty and perfectly tooth-powdered molars were cracked of enamel. Or he might even have a chance to do to them what their parents hadn't had enough brains to do—what is done in woodsheds to their brothers!

The hope filled him with unrighteous delight. And then—then—

Absorbed, he had not heard fresh, careful footsteps from the window, down the hall—Ah!

**THE** unexpected happened. This last comer was warier than the others, and knew, moreover, that a velvet curtain hung at hand. Fingers reached, clutched, caught. A thin small form flattened like a pine board into supposed shelter. Oh—gurgle!

Gurgle that never rose upon the air! Arthur had his hand hard upon her mouth, and had otherwise so grasped her body that she could not twist a thin shoulder or wiggle an ankle.

"Keep still!" he breathed grimly in her ear. Somehow he knew that it was Linny. And her hair was so perfumed that her presence would betray itself to a dozen dark rooms. It was a mixed Parisian-named scent, too, that he detested; for six months it had been the rage among Linny's kind, and had assailed him in theater, restaurant and elevator.

Because of this close contact, he was afraid that his own clothes would reek of it. Good heavens, he'd have to give this suit away.

She struggled wordlessly. But it was like holding a skinny child. She had no chance. For effect, he shook her a little. But he was careful not to loose his good tight hold of her. He was making ready to leap down the hall, incommoded as he was by her, when—stumble!

Not Kemmer himself. Some one in the room. A heavy foot had hit something heavier, like an old walnut leg of a chair.

"Damn it!"

Almost Kemmer let Linny go. That throaty voice sounded familiar. And it was no young man's voice! He became aware, too, that the girl in his arms had seemed to collapse, to be incapable of movement.

Indeed, she seemed instantly to cringe against him, as if for a concealment more complete.

The user of profanity must have been the last to enter the room. And he seemed not a crafty person. He flashed a large pocket-light over the room. He had careful, middle-aged movements. And his own light revealed him. Linny must have shuddered.

Like many middle-aged men, this one was a little hard of hearing. He disregarded two slight sounds which Kemmer caught. But he saw—he saw a foot.

**NOT** his own foot. Another man's! Kemmer saw it too. The leg to which this foot was attached was behind a revolving bookcase in the southeast corner of the room.

It was a thin, old-fashioned leg.

"Come out," said Linny's father commandingly. "Whether you're young Westby or a common burglar!"

Rather tremblingly the leg came—also its mate, and a neat white head.

"Why—why, what are you doing here?"

"What are you, George?" tremulously retorted the addressee.

There was no reply. The flash-lamp had come to rest upon something prim and white, with a bald spot, at one side of a huge brown leather couch in the northwest corner of the room.

The bald spot rose. A form that had been on all fours appeared.

"It's only me," a voice said waveringly.

"You!"

"You!"

"You had a lecture in Oaktown!"

"I sent word I was detained by an accident."

A sneeze! A sneeze from somebody under a massive walnut desk.

Henry Bean crawled out somewhat sheepishly and was helped to his feet by six hands. A stout man, he panted. He sneezed again.

"Whatever that Bat fellow may be," he declared with heat, "his mother is a poor product. Instead of gallivanting and leaving her house to be entered by anyone at all, she'd better stay at home and stand over a hired girl while the dust gets wiped from the hidden places in this room."

Speaking earnestly, he had moved his foot.

"Ouch!" said a voice resentfully.

Four electric torches were turned under a heavy armchair.

"It's me," said Linny's cousin Burt, scrambling out and up. "No, I don't feel even a Platonic affection for my irresponsible cousin Linny. And God knows I pity the man she marries. But I must say, Uncle George, you might have trusted me to help the little idiot out of her scrape—although I'll say I only by accident managed to evade Arthur and get here. But for you, Uncle George, to engage in anything so questionable—even risky—"

"Risky, your foot!" snorted his uncle. "I've known Mary Westby since third grade in school. And I'd be glad if she caught me here, or that son of hers, either. And if you'll tell me what else I could do except try to keep my name and my child's out of the newspapers and save her from consequences which she richly deserves—but which no father could make up his mind to let her incur, even if he had to break into an old friend's house, like a common law-breaker! Had to send word, too, to the Rotarians that I sprained my ankle!"

"I sent word," growled Bean, "that I was threatened with ptomaine!"

## William McFee Comes into Port

A good many years ago a book dropped out of the sky into the laps of the critics that made them all sit up a little straighter in their chairs and rub their eyes. Its title was "CASUALS OF THE SEA," and it was—and is—a great novel. Its author, it was learned in due time, was a Scotch engineer of ocean ships. Presently essays by that same engineer—brilliant bits of description, articles about strange places, critical studies, and what not—began to appear here and there

in the important magazines. And all the time McFee was practicing the writing of short stories. But not until now has he been inclined to publish any of them. In an early issue of this magazine will appear the first of a group he has been writing for you during the past year. In their brilliance, color, power and human appeal they are among the really greatest stories The Red Book Magazine has ever published—which though saying a good deal, is still not saying too much.



"Well, why should you—"

"I thought you made a mistake to lock her up! If she'd been mine, I'd let her have a chance to extricate herself from her mess."

"I think George did right to keep her in her room," declared Professor Musmull in a gentle, dignified voice. "Those young persons, Hugg and Bat, seemed of very brutal and evil natures. But I reflected that I was an old man and responsible enough to do an irresponsible deed for the sake of a silly little girl who has no idea how life can turn and rend you for your own thoughtless acts. Besides—" He coughed.

"Besides what?"

"Well, Linny looks a little like her grand-aunt. The eyes, at least. It is true that Amelia never used cosmetics; and I cannot imagine her purloining a young man's pocketbook even under the impression that it was a cigarette-case. Indeed, she did not allow me to smoke as much as I wished, on account of tobacco's deleterious effect on the curtains." He sighed. "I blame the war."

"I was afraid, Gray, that you hadn't taken into account how low-down mean some young males can be. I got to thinking she might land in some cell with a female bandit—and you know the newspapers are rather keen right now about playing up instances of youthful depravity."

"I dare say some defect in my own nature is responsible for her flightiness," gloomed the father.

"Possibly the inhibitions of the Puritan nineties are the original cause," sighed the Professor. "Do you remember that you sulked two years because you could not afford a phaeton?"

IT was Burt who suggested that they put hands upon what they had come for, and depart.

"Of course, we can alibi each other. But those young cubs Linny trains with are bad actors when they have the opportunity. Don't fancy letting 'em get anything on me."

There was immediate agreement, and Hoterick said that he had skinned his shin making the window and needed liniment, anyway.

"I scraped my leg," grunted the father.

"I bumped my left knee," came a dignified sigh.

Five lights played over the desk. There came five grunts of satisfaction. A platinum link shone from a bursting clasp. Besides, it was lettered "H. Brown."

"Here's a rubber band," offered the cousin. "Seems intact."

He eyed the glittering link coldly. "Hope the young rotter learns a lesson and puts whatever it is back in his mother's jewel-box."

The father put it into his pocket and then the five filed through the doorway. Kemmer thanked dead architects for double doors and velvet portières. When, clumsily for the most part, and with audible grunts, the five had gone through the window at the end of the hall, Kemmer gave an exclamation.

"You little devil!"

Linny had set her teeth into his palm.

"Your hand became tiresome," she whispered viciously. "Who are you?"

"Doesn't matter."

"You're not Bat. You're too thin. You're not Hugg. You're too tall." She ran her free hand over his face. He regretted his tortoise-rimmed glasses. Still, these are fairly common.

She did not recognize him by them. But she flashed an unexpected electric torch. Too late he tried to turn his face.

"You!"

"Yes." She was no longer in his hold.

"What are you doing here?"

"I hardly know," he snapped. "Possibly primeval instinct—if you know what that means."



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"Oh, I know. My, yes!"

"I doubt."

"Oh, I took biology at school. Some of it soaked in."

"Actually?"

"Never mind. What are you doing here?"

"Never mind." He added irritably: "It happened to be a chattel, like the other five."

"I'm dumfounded," she said oddly. "I never dreamed that you had an idea outside yourself and your future!"

"Really?"

"Well,"—defensively,—"you rising young professional men are so fond of yourselves. It sticks out all over you. I always feel very sorry for your wives."

"Oh, you do?" Sarcasm rose to her bait.

"Well, the poor things—the wives, I mean—have to be so much on the job—helpful creatures, you know, who never let the furrowed husbandly brow become discouraged. You know all that junk you read in married-life stories."

"Hadn't we better be on our way?" he said with dignity.

Then he wished that he had not said that. Her way need not be his. He played his electric torch down the hall and followed the gleam. But she was quick to keep at his side.

"Don't leave me!"—crossly. "I didn't think the house would be so dark."

"Is that all you're thinking?" he demanded with asperity.

"No!" unexpectedly she retorted. "I'm—I'm so surprised I don't want to think. About all of you!"

"I hope your friend Hugg will be satisfied."

"I hope so too. It was the tooth he minded worst."

He had assisted her through the window to the ground. Now they were on the street, and her former whispers had lightly given place to a distinct contralto.

"The tooth?" said Kemmer involuntarily.

"Hugg's first baby tooth, which his mother had set with a tiny sapphire and hung on a platinum chain. Bat was so delighted to get it, and he threatened to take it to college to show everyone—"

"Was that the most valuable thing in that bill-book for which we risked—"

"Oh, there was other stuff! There was a bill for Hugg's toilet water—he was wild for fear the fellows would find out how much he spends on that—and a charge slip for the electric horse that he was trying to learn to ride on at home in privacy—Hugg's always talking about renowned polo players. And there was a bootlegger's reminder about some gin that Hugg didn't want his mother to hear about—"

"I see," said Kemmer grimly. "How pleased your father and cousin and the others will be when they learn—"

"I don't want them to know!" she wailed. "Don't you dare tell them!"

"Why not?"

"You are a dumb-dora!"

"Oh, I am?"

"It was," said Linny evenly and curiously, "awfully good of them to try to save me the trouble of getting back Hugg's property. I'm afraid my wild days are over—I'll always be worrying about what unexpected thing a bunch of older men are apt to do. And if you spoil everything by blabbing what I've been foolish enough to let slip—"

He forestalled any mad threat. "I won't tell!"

"Thanks."

They had come to a cross-street.

"How did you get out of your room?" he asked.

"Two nail-files for unscrewing the whole lock." She waved a hand and began to run down the side-street. "Good night. I want to get home first."

ARTHUR KEMMER rejoined his friend and professional associate, who with an eye-shade was bent over desk and architectural plans. Burt was scowling, as if the work was hard.

"Headache better?" he asked.  
"Much."

Kemmer did not feel inclined for conversation with Burt. Linny occupied his mind. He found himself dwelling unwillingly upon what sort of a wife Linny would make a rising young professional man. He feared that she would be a distracting helpmeet. It was true, of course, that no man particularly yearns for a too-docile wife. Still, one likes to approach the future with a certain amount of trust and calm. Whereas Linny—

He gave a sigh. He did not like the aspect of the future. It gleamed uncertainly, that future—like quicksilver.

On the other hand, it might prove to be real silver. He sighed again—helplessly, but not as if overdiminished. Linny had been a soft and scented armful. He rather regretted, now, that the evening was over. . . . The tooth-marks in his palm still hurt. He looked at them, surreptitiously, and grinned. The little devil! But could anybody really blame her? Somehow he couldn't.

## LET'S GO!

(Continued from page 68)

I'm sent back. We might as well forestall them this time."

Mrs. Peters knew what this meant. It meant that the ranks of Government employees were in for a thinning out, but there was nothing that she could do. So she went across the hall.

Mr. Peters, in due time, faced his tormentor again. The man looked at the blank, hanging with decorations, and grudgingly admitted that it was all set. Just one more change he made. He crossed out "blue" after Mr. Peters' "eyes" and wrote in "evil." Poor chap, it must have been divination on his part. "Hold up your right hand," he said, "and take off your hat."

Mr. Peters held up his left hand.

"Do you solemnly swear to protect the Constitution of the United States to shechtufjhoftus, lsirycsnantoyueofsetopfgtehscytll—to the best of your knowledge and belief, so help you God?"

"I do not!" said Mr. Peters.

"What do you mean, not?" demanded the man.

"Just what I say," replied Mr. Peters quietly. "Not only will I not swear to protect the Constitution of the United States. I will do everything in my power to violate it. And what do you want to make of it?"

"Just a minute," said the man. And he called over to an assistant: "Get Miss Freelinghausen from Room 12, please."

"And I don't go back to Room 12, either," added Mr. Peters.

"Will you step in here for a minute?" said the man, indicating a small office behind the counter.

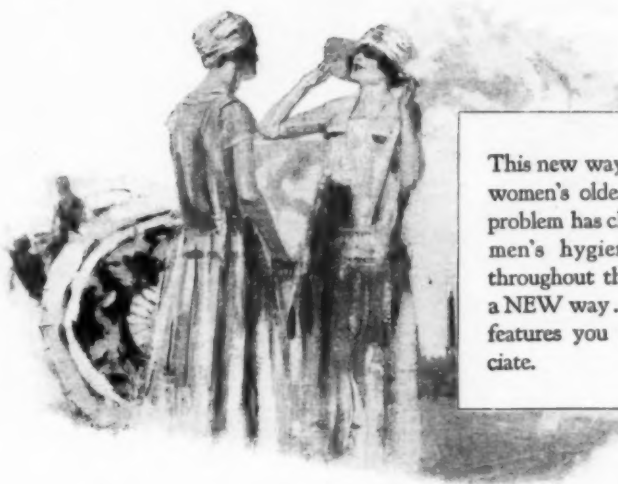
"With pleasure," said Mr. Peters. And as they entered they were joined by Miss Freelinghausen.

That, according to employees of the bureau, was the last time that Miss Freelinghausen and the man were seen alive. An unknown man, they reported, left the little office alone about fifteen minutes later. He seemed quite calm, and nothing was thought of his solitary exit. He was seen to meet his wife at the door of Room 12 across the hall, and together they disappeared. The man and Miss Freelinghausen were not found until half an hour later.

Next month Mr. Peters' career of crime takes an even more sinister turn—and Mr. Benchley will tell all about it, in these pages.

# Misty Gowns and Filmy Frocks

Wear them now in security, without a second thought



This new way in solving women's oldest hygienic problem has changed women's hygienic habits throughout the world in a NEW way... 3 unique features you will appreciate.

TO be charming, exquisite, beyond all doubt, every minute, every day! Do you seek the peace of mind, that knowing you are will bring?

Modern science has supplanted the old-time sanitary pad in a new way... a way different from any you have ever known.

It absorbs 16 times its own weight in moisture. Five times that of the ordinary cotton pad.

It does away with the uncertainty of makeshift ways.

It is as easily disposed of as a piece of tissue. No laundry.

It is deodorized—an all-important advantage.

### What it is

It is called Kotex, and is made of Cellucotton, the war's super-absorbent.

Use it and wear your filmiest frocks, your lightest of silks... dance, motor, dine, without fear of losing a single moment's precious charm.

Use it, too, for your health's sake. 60% of many ills, common to women, are traced by many authorities to the use of unsanitary ways... and 80% of the charm that's today expected of women at all times!

It will make a great difference in your life.

It will bring you a feeling of security, of immaculacy that is positive. No other method again will ever satisfy.

### Test it, please

Obtain Kotex at any department or drug store,\* in sanitary packages of 12, in two sizes: the Regular, and Kotex-Super (extra thick). You ask for it without hesitancy simply by saying "Kotex."

# KOTEX

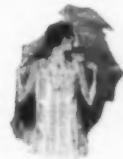
DEODORIZED



Kotex Regular: 65¢  
Kotex-Super: 90¢  
Per Dozen

\*Supplied also in personal service cabinets in women's rest-rooms by The West Disinfecting Co.

You'll appreciate these 3 factors



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2 No laundry. As easy to dispose of as a piece of tissue—thus ending the trying problem of disposal.



3 Easy to buy anywhere.\* Many stores keep them ready-wrapped—help yourself, pay the clerk, that is all.



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**D**ON'T suffer with sunburn! Use REXALL GYPSY CREAM. A wonderfully quick and effective remedy for sunburn, heat rash, ivy poisoning, moth itch and otherskin eruptions so troublesome during these hot summer months.

REXALL GYPSY CREAM is not unpleasant to apply and gives almost instant relief. Soothing, cooling, delightful on burning or itching skin. Be sure to take a bottle of GYPSY CREAM when you go on your vacation. Sold only at Rexall Drug Stores.

*"There is one near you"*

THE UNITED DRUG COMPANY  
BOSTON

## BLUE STEEL

(Continued from page 59)

Precinct—a half-dozen grocery stores, two meat-markets, four drug-stores, a cigar-store, a barber-shop, a dry-cleaning establishment, a moving-picture theater—other places of business; and, small and unimposing, the very substantial Neighborhood Trust Company.

The scene was quite tranquil and innocent—no suggestion here of lithe and evil young men, of nitroglycerin, of chloroform for the watchman, of blue-steel revolvers and strange and effective burglar tools. The Fifth slept happily behind its bulwark of unimpeachable respectability, all unmindful of Blood Moreno and of Flash Morgan's Greyhounds. As Flash moved catlike toward the little bank building, his professional eye lighted with approval. This indeed was a place to tempt the cracksmen; it was, in fact, almost a crime to leave it untapped. Even a noonday holdup would be easy here. Flash Morgan was rather partial to picturesque holdups; it was fascinating to read the newspapers the day after: "Daring robbers . . . point of pistol . . . in bold defiance of the police. . . ."

Flash was not quite certain what he intended to do, except that it was his plan to visit punishment upon Blood Moreno for this insurrection. Also, it was vaguely in his mind that he would prevent the robbery if he was in time; but his paramount thought was that he would show the gang once and for all that Flash Morgan ruled, and that his edicts were not to be disobeyed.

**H**E flattened himself against a wall. Shadowy forms moved wraithlike out of the doorway of the Neighborhood Trust; one of them carried a satchel. Flash knew that he was too late; yet despite his bitter fury against Blood Moreno, he could not help but applaud the expedition with which the job had been pulled.

They passed him one by one, never noticing him in the shadow where he crouched motionless. As they turned down the alley, a big figure bulked before him, and even in the darkness Flash Morgan recognized Moreno.

Morgan moved. His hand jammed against Moreno's ribs, and there was something in the hand. Blood knew the feel of an automatic. He stopped.

In very low tones and with words which were entirely unmistakable, Flash Morgan expressed his personal opinion of Blood Moreno; and as he spoke, there came into the brain of Mr. Moreno a hunch that he was in a rather precarious position. The next second that hunch became a certainty.

Blood was not lacking in courage. Now there came to reinforce that courage the desperation of the cornered rat. Mr. Moreno thought quickly—and acted almost as quickly.

It was rather unfortunate for Mr. Moreno that he was not quick enough. His pile-driving blow never landed. The automatic spoke, and Mr. Moreno's fist stopped in midair, then sank slowly as Mr. Moreno crumpled to the sidewalk. A big figure a half-block away heard the shot, saw a shadow fall and lie motionless—saw another shadow disappear in the Stygian gloom of the alley—heard the roar of a motor.

The big figure reached the body with unbelievable speed for a man so large. In one hand he held a regulation police revolver, in the other a flashlight. He inspected—then straightened.

"Blood Moreno—I thought so." Then a sorrowful frown creased the forehead of Police Lieutenant Daniel Boone Rariden. "I thought that was Flash Morgan runnin' away—I know the lad's stride. . . . Dog-gone him for this, anyway!"

He shrilled his whistle. A startled patrolman answered. There was a hurried telephone call to the precinct station; two plain-clothes men sped to the scene in a little roadster. The investigation disclosed many things, things which caused Police Lieutenant Daniel Boone Rariden to shake his head sorrowfully.

**E**VEN in death the feud between Blood Moreno and Flash Morgan continued; for all of the glaring evidence found by the police lieutenant indicated beyond possibility of contradiction that the robbery had been negotiated by Flash Morgan in person. Mr. Moreno had done this in a very efficient and thoughtful manner; it was quite evidently his intention to rob his chieftain of no scintilla of the glory accruing to such a magnificent escapade as this. Also—proving in some measure that Mr. Moreno's calculations were not entirely wrong—it happened that Police Lieutenant Daniel Boone Rariden put the incriminating evidence in his pocket and determined to think things over.

The story caught the morning papers just before press time and therefore received little space. But with the evening dailies, the case was different. Here was a story unusually savory, and it came at a time when there was a dearth of good news. Besides, none of the three evening papers was overly fond of the police department; and now—

Well, the ultra-respectable Fifth Precinct had been violated. Nor was that all; murder had been committed upon its very doorstep. Children on their way to school the next morning shuddered deliciously over the dark red stain on the sidewalk—the stain which the grocery-store porter had been careful not to erase. Housewives, engaged in their matutinal marketing, turned shuddery eyes at the spot—X—where the body was found, and at the interior of the rifled bank. This was the Fifth's formal introduction to crime, and the Fifth luxuriated in its fear. Bank robbed—man murdered. What would the police do about it?

Headquarters summoned Police Lieutenant Daniel Boone Rariden. Headquarters was unhappy. Headquarters frowned up from the evening papers. "Hell's busted loose, Rariden."

## Arthur Akers

He lives down in Birmingham, Alabama, and he writes stories of the colored people down there that are very real. There'll be one in an early issue, the story of a country colored boy in a big town.

Don't miss  
"MEET THE  
MANAGER"

"Yes, Chief; it has."  
 "Who did it?"  
 "I'm not certain."  
 "Who d'yuh think?"  
 Eyes met squarely. "The Greyhounds, I think."

"Hm! Thought so. Raiding from the Fourth. Flash Morgan's gang."

"Yes sir."  
 "Get 'em!"  
 "Yes sir."  
 "Quick!"  
 "Yes sir."

Some men are born honest; some are born crooked. And some are born policeman. Police Lieutenant Daniel Boone Rariden went in search of his friend Flash Morgan. He went regretfully enough—but he went. There was no question in his mind, no hesitation. He was a policeman not only by profession, but by instinct.

The visit was not unexpected. Flash was in his room reading an evening paper. The men gazed at each other with eyes of stubborn friendship.

"Lo, Dan."

"Howdy, Flash."

"Pleasant evening, aint it?"

"No." The cold gray eyes of Rariden did not waver. "You broke your word to me, Flash."

A shadow of pain crossed Morgan's face. He had expected this, but it hurt, nevertheless. The killing of Blood Moreno had complicated matters—messily. Mere robbery was one thing; murder was quite something else. And the ignorant Fifth could not be expected to know that the dead man was only Blood Moreno.

"You promised me, Flash," said Rariden, "that you wouldn't pull no rough stuff in my precinct."

"Yes, Dan, I did."

"You lied, Flash."

"How do you know?"

"This." Rariden displayed his evidence. "It was found in the bank. There aint any getting around that."

Flash Morgan felt a sudden and very genuine sorrow over the demise of Mr. Moreno. He yearned to repeat the homicide. So that was Blood's game, eh? To plant evidence against him, evidence which only Dan Rariden could recognize, then to seek safety behind the friendship of Rariden and himself.

"That all you found?"

"Yes."

"It spots me, eh? Not anybody else?"

"Exactly."

"Hm! That might have been planted."

"It wasn't." Rariden spoke positively.

"How do you know?"

"Because, Flash—I saw you kill Blood Moreno."

"Hm!" Flash realized that his position was embarrassing. But that, at the moment, was not what interested him most. The thought which drummed in his brain was that something had come between himself and his buddy; it hurt him that Rariden should believe he had gone back on his word. But he knew that Rariden was too literal-minded to believe a mere denial, and so he thought—

"You've got me, Dan."

"Yeh—I've got you."

"And it aint doing you a bit of good."

"Not a bit."

"What you want is the money, aint it?"

"Uh-huh."

"Leave me go free for a few hours. I'll see what I can do."

"All right, Flash. No funny stuff, though."

"Aw, Dan—"

"Well, you pulled this job after you promised—"

"I aint admitted that, have I?"

"No-o. And I wouldn't expect you to. Always since I've been on the force, Flash,

THIS booklet tells you how to preserve feminine daintiness.



## A woman's three requisites are health, youth—daintiness

TODAY'S standard of womanhood is contained in three words, health, youth, daintiness. And perhaps the last of these has been hardest to obtain. The charm of feminine immaculacy is continually threatened by the results of fatigue and weakness—results that take their toll of health and youth as well, in little lines and listlessness, a general letting down of physical tone.

Fastidious woman struggled blindly with this problem until at last a great antiseptic came to her relief. Feminine daintiness is assured by the regular practice of feminine hygiene, a practice that is recommended by physicians everywhere.

### The antiseptic your physician recommends for feminine hygiene

THE antiseptic which your physician will advocate as standard for feminine hygiene is "Lysol" Disinfectant. "Lysol" is soothing to delicate membranes. Physicians recommend it because it is absolutely trustworthy—100% effective as a destroyer of germs.

It provides you with complete antiseptic and at the same time it is so finely blended that in proper proportion it is actually soothing and lubricating. It

leaves you with a comfortable feeling of general well-being.

In addition are "Lysol's" gentle deodorant qualities. Once you have adopted this health and daintiness precaution you will use it regularly.

### You will want to read the story of feminine hygiene in this free booklet

ONE of the three volumes in the "Lysol" Health Library is devoted to a frank discussion of the important subject of feminine hygiene, of the great comfort and protection it can be to you.

You will be interested in this volume, and in the two others: "Health Safeguards in the Home," with many practical suggestions on guarding your family's health, and "When Baby Comes," full of helpful hints for the expectant mother.

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I've been hoping I'd never have to do this. When'll you drift in?"

"By nine in the morning?"

"O. K. Remember—"

"Listen here, Dan: one more crack out of you like that, and I'll make you take me now. I'm a crook, but I aint a liar—with you."

Dan gazed intently at his friend. Somehow a bit of his faith returned. "There's something awful funny about this," he commented.

"You're doggone tootin' there is, Dan Rariden. I'm just sorry that you—Aw, hell, what's the use of sloppin' over?"

DAN returned to the precinct station, steely-eyed and grim-jawed. To the newspaper men gathered there he was as communicative as a freshly dug clam.

"Nothin' to say yet."

"Any idea who pulled the job?"

"Nothin' to say."

"The Greyhounds, wasn't it?"

"Nothin' to say, boys."

"You were born in the Fourth, weren't you, Rariden?"

"Uh-huh!"

"Pretty good friend of Flash Morgan's, aren't you?"

"Pretty good."

"You haven't any ideas—"

"I haven't anything to say—and that's all. When there's any news, I'll give it to you. You boys mean well, but sometimes you hamper the Department in your eternal smooching around for stories. Lay off awhile, will you? When the real story breaks, it'll be a pip."

Meanwhile Flash Morgan established himself in the rear of Wink Sullivan's saloon. He issued orders, and within the next hour the erring Greyhounds drifted shamefacedly into his presence. They were nervous and ill at ease. Also, they were frightened. Hardened as they were, a public killing was more than they had counted on, and they cringed beneath the level, accusing stare of their chief.

"In the first place, boys," announced Flash Morgan, "you're a bunch of dirty, rotten rats."

"Blood said—"

"I don't give a damn what Blood said. I'm running this gang. Blood Moreno knew I was running it—he knew it awful pointed just before he passed out."

They looked at one another. Was it possible? They hadn't seen Flash the night of the robbery.

"Where's the stuff?" snapped Morgan.

"What stuff?"

"The Neighborhood Trust haul. I'll give you guys one hour to produce."

"If it's a split you want—"

"I want it all. It's going back. I'm handing it over to Dan Rariden."

"Say, aint that—"

"Shut up! Listen to me. Are you fellows idiots enough to think you can get away with this kind of stuff? Double-cross me, and then play Rariden for a sucker? Don't you know Dan has got you spotted—every last one of you? Why, you

aint got a chance on earth. Try to beat it, and it's all off; and every one of you as guilty of killin' Blood Moreno as the man that croaked him. You're in for a stretch apiece, but if you come clean with me, I can just about promise that this murder stuff will be dropped. Now what's the answer? Do you act wise, or shall I make you?"

THEY decided to act wise. One hour later the spoils were delivered to Flash Morgan. Immediately Mr. Morgan repaired to the Fifth Precinct police station and delivered the money to his friend Dan Rariden. Dan smiled. "Much obliged, Flash. This helps."

"Just one thing, Dan—the bunch didn't have a thing to do with bumping Moreno off."

"I know it."

"And there aint to be any murder charge against 'em. Burglary, all right; but nix on the murder."

"That's all right—I'll look after that end of it."

"Good! And now—about me?"

"I guess you don't have to ask, do you, Flash?"

"I reckon not. 'Spose I might just as well hang up my hat an' make myself at home, eh?"

"Uh-huh!"

And so Police Lieutenant Daniel Boone Rariden arrested his friend. There was pain in that little office—pain and suffering—and a considerable puzzlement in the glance Rariden bestowed upon Flash Morgan. As for Morgan, he was too proud to explain; he felt that Dan should know, should understand without words, that he had not been untrue to the trust of their friendship.

Flash went to a cell. It was a very nice cell, more of a room, in fact—a place reserved usually for indiscreet ladies; but it was nevertheless a cell. Mr. Morgan was not happy; he was too fond of life, liberty and the pursuit of other people's money.

Dan Rariden threw out a dragnet. One by one the members-in-good-standing of the Greyhounds were brought in. They were worried; they were quite willing to do a burglary stretch, provided their chief did not throw them down on his promise that no charge of murder would be chalked against them. It was a blue day for the Greyhounds. Flash was permitted to visit them. He smiled sardonically: "You're a fine mess of tripe, you are! I guess when you get out, you'll run around with bad boys like Blood Moreno again!"

"Aw, Flash, he told us—"

"Sure. I know what he told you—that Dan Rariden would think I was mixed up in it, and he'd lay off you because I and him is good friends. Well, I'm here with you, and you know how much I had to do with soupin' that box."

Back to his private cell went Flash Morgan. A turnkey who had eavesdropped the interview delivered an interesting report to Police Lieutenant Daniel Boone Rariden. Lieutenant Rariden left the precinct station

and made for the County Courthouse. Two hours later he returned to the Fifth. He went straight to the private room of his friend, flung open the door.

"C'mon, Flash."

"Where?"

"We're goin' for a walk."

Flash knew that Dan was happy. He did not ask the reason. He followed the police lieutenant into the sunlight, and shoulder to shoulder, they strolled toward the narrow avenue which divided the Fourth and Fifth precincts. It was Rariden who broke the silence.

"Flash," he said, "you done me an awful dirty trick."

"How?"

"Lettin' me think you was in on that Neighborhood Trust job."

"Well,"—bitterly,—"who says I wasn't?"

"The Greyhounds."

"Those guys?"

"Uh-huh. The warden heard you talkin' to 'em. I kind of planted that, Flash. Looked awful queer to me how all the evidence pointed to you—and it was the kind of evidence I'd recognize. None of it would have meant a thing to an ordinary dick. I kind of got a hunch somebody was trying to hide. Anyway, I'm sorry I said you threw me down."

"That's all right, Dan; I guess you had a right to think it."

"No, I didn't. You aint ever lied to me, and I don't believe you ever would. Only for a time I thought—"

"Lay off the sob stuff—" But even as he said it, Flash Morgan's hand dropped softly on the shoulder of his friend.

"The Greyhounds are in for about a five years' stretch apiece, Flash. I'm sorry, but it mighta been worse."

"Yeh—it mighta."

"And now," Rariden stopped at the curb. "I guess I'd better say good-by."

"Good-by?"

"Uh-huh! I got to get back to the Fifth."

"But how about me?"

"I aint got anything to do with you. I've got the guys who robbed that bank. You didn't—and you're free."

"Free! Don't be a fool, Dan Rariden. Who says I'm free?"

"The District Attorney."

"That bimbo? Say, there's a heap I don't get. What's he gonna say to the newspapers? You've got the gang, but how about the killing of Blood Moreno? I promised the bunch—"

"The gang aint got a thing to do with Moreno getting bumped off. The District Attorney understands that, and he's fixing up a statement for the newspapers."

"But Blood is dead. Somebody's got to be punished, don't they?"

"No."

"But—"

Police Lieutenant Daniel Boone Rariden spoke earnestly: "It aint any crime for a police officer to kill a yegg, is it. Flash? No sir, not a bit. Well, I happened to get to that corner just after the robbery was over. As I explained to the District Attorney, I seen the gang, and I seen Blood Moreno. I yelled at him to stop, and when he didn't, I busted loose—which is just exactly how Mr. Moreno happened to pass from our midst so suddenly."

The hardness left Flash Morgan's face. His hand tightened on the arm of his friend.

"You killed Blood Moreno?" he asked.

"Sure I did. And don't you go saying I didn't, because—"

"I wont say a thing, Dan." Flash was speaking slowly, choosing his words with care. "I don't want to say anything which aint respectful to a police officer. But Dan, if anybody else had told me that you killed Blood Moreno, I would have said he was a damn' liar."

## ROY COHEN

The present-day South does not hold a short-story writer more popular than this young man. For he is a young man still, and always will be. When you read his story which concludes on this page, you'll be glad to know that there is to be another soon.



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